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The Works of John Ruskin

John Ruskin, Edward Tyas Cook, Alexander Dundas Ogilvy Wedderburn

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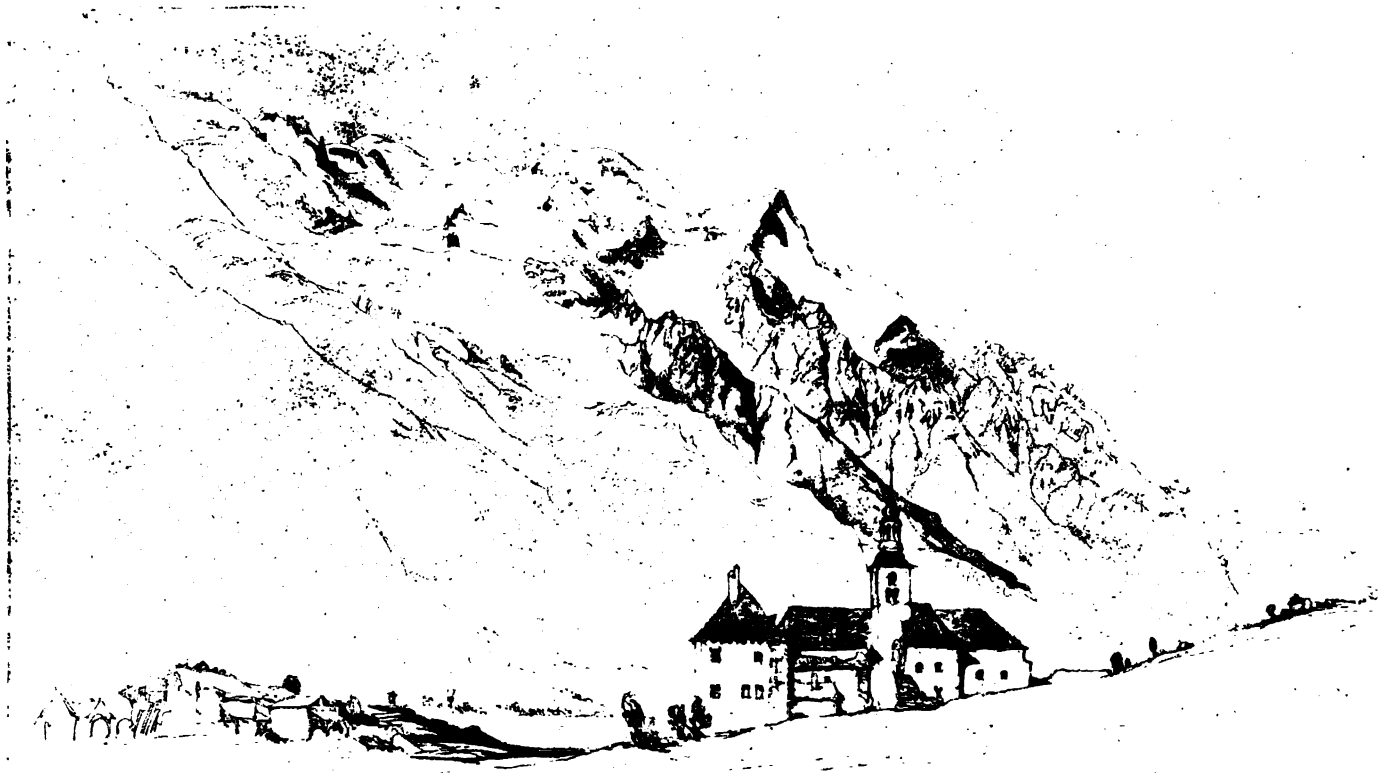

CHAMOUNI.

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THE WORKS OF JOHN RUSKIN

EDITED BY

E. T. COOK

AND

ALEXANDER WEDDERBURN

LONDON
GEORGE ALLEN, 156, CHARING CROSS ROAD
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VOLUME II

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These considerations, together with typographical convenience, have governed the arrangement of the present volume. Its contents may roughly be placed under two heads: (*a*) pieces which were published on their merits at the beginning of Ruskin's literary career; (*b*) pieces which were published after he had become famous in other fields of literature, on account of the interest reflected upon them by those achievements. This division corresponds with the circumstances under which the several pieces were originally published. The volume consists of three parts and an appendix. Part I. is a reprint of the *Poems* collected in 1850, with Ruskin's sanction, by his father from the various periodicals, etc., in which they had originally appeared. Part II. consists of a few Verses of Later Years. Part III. consists of the *juvenilia*. These were first printed in 1891, with his general consent, but at the discretion and on the selection of the editor to whom the task was entrusted. In an appendix, Ruskin's edition of "Dame Wiggins of Lee" (1885) is reprinted, together with some other nursery rhymes which were published in the *Poems*, 1891. It will thus be seen that a reader desiring to study Ruskin's verses only from the biographical point of view should first read Part III., and then return to Parts I. and II. The early verses are often of great interest, and in some ways of greater interest than many of the later pieces. But for reasons already stated, this volume gives precedence to the more mature poems.

I

It is not always remembered that it was as a writer of verse that Ruskin first appeared before the world. The first piece of writing from his pen that appeared in print was in verse.[1] He was a favourite as an Album Poet before he had published any considerable essay in prose whatever. It was into verse that he threw the best efforts of his earlier years. It was upon hopes of poetic fame that his fond parents fed their admiration for his genius, and as a budding poet he first won attention in literary coteries. He described in later years how some of the pieces here given in Part I. "made my unwise friends radiantly happy in the thought that I should certainly be a poet, and as exquisitely miserable at the first praises of then clear-dawning Tennyson."[2] The judicious reader, who neither allows himself to read into Ruskin's verse a glamour from his prose, nor to be blinded by the greater merits of the prose to any merits in the verse, will probably sympathise a little with the hopes, while entirely applauding Ruskin's ultimate choice. His real strength lay in other directions; but

[1] "On Skiddaw and Derwent Water:" see p. 265. The appearance of this piece in print as early as 1830 has hitherto escaped notice in accounts of Ruskin's *juvenilia*.

[2] *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. ch. v. (added in 1877) § 2.

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if at all times he missed being a poet, he sometimes missed it only by a hair's-breadth.

Ruskin himself came to regard his poetic career as a false start. "My son," wrote his father to W. H. Harrison from Venice (May 25, 1846), "has not written a line of poetry, . . . he only regrets ever having written any. He thinks all his own poetry very worthless, and considers it unfortunate that he prematurely worked any small mine of poetry he might possess. He seems to think the mine is exhausted, and neither gold nor silver given to the world." Ruskin was drawn into working the mine by his own precocious facility, by the chances of literary introduction, by the encouragement of his father, and by a certain success in hitting the taste of the time. To his precocious facility and his father's encouragement of it we shall presently return. He has told, in *Præterita*,[1] the chance which opened the way into print for his youthful verses. Through a cousin, who was a clerk in the house of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., he was introduced to Thomas Pringle, the Scottish poet, at that time editor of *Friendship's Offering*, a fashionable Annual published by the firm. Pringle was struck by the young Ruskin's gifts, and published some of his pieces. The first thus to appear were "Salzburg" (p. 441), and "Fragments from a Metrical Journal" (p. 353). These came out in the Annual for 1835, published in the preceding autumn. Pringle was succeeded in the editorship by W. H. Harrison,[2] of whom Ruskin gave some account (in the vein of *Præterita*) in a paper entitled "My First Editor." Harrison was a close friend of Ruskin's father, and a great admirer of the son's talent. During the years of his editorship (1837–41) Harrison had a first call on all Ruskin's poems. Ruskin's connexion with *Friendship's Offering* continued after Harrison ceased to edit it; and his contributions were also sought for in other publications of the kind—such as *The Amaranth*, edited by T. K. Hervey (editor also of *The Athenæum*), and *The Keepsake* and *The Book of Beauty*, both edited by Lady Blessington. Indeed, no miscellany for the boudoir was considered complete without a copy of verses from "J. R." of "Christ Church, Oxford." In the essay above referred to Ruskin described the "meekly-minded persons," by whom these Annuals of the early Victorian time and style were written, and to whom they were addressed. In the Memoir of Mr. George Smith, the publisher, a higher claim is made, not without some justice, for one at least of the Annuals:—

> "The writers in *Friendship's Offering* were the most distinguished of the day. They included not only veterans like Southey, Coleridge, and the Ettrick Shepherd, but also beginners like Tennyson and

[1] i. ch. v. § 103.

[2] *Cf.* Vol. I. p. xlviii.

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Ruskin. The Hon. Mrs. Norton, Miss Mitford, and Miss Strickland, were regular contributors. To the volume for 1833 Macaulay contributed his 'Ballad of the Armada.' The numerous plates in each issue were after pictures by the greatest artists of the time, and were engraved by the best available talent. When the series was at its zenith of popularity, some eight to ten thousand copies of each volume were sold at Christmas" (*Dictionary of National Biography*, Supplementary Volume I., 1901, p. xiv.).

To this Annual alone Ruskin contributed twenty-seven pieces between 1835 and 1844.[1] He also contributed three drawings, beautifully engraved by E. Goodall (see below, p. xliii. *n*) and J. C. Armytage. Reviewers were on the whole very favourable, and it was seldom that lines by J. R. were not selected for appreciative quotation.[2] He was, in short, one of the popular Album Poets of the day.[3]

The Poems contributed to these albums, with the others collected in 1850, fall into four main groups: (1) love poems, (2) Herodotean poems, (3) prize poems, and (4) poems of nature. The love poems were inspired by Mdlle. Adèle Domecq, to whom a passing reference has already been made in the Introduction to Volume I. (p. xxxiii.). When Mr. Domecq brought his four younger daughters to Herne Hill, it was, says Ruskin, as "a Southern Cross of unconceived stars floating on a sudden into my obscure firmament of a London suburb."[4] Adèle Clotilde, the eldest of the four, was a graceful blonde of fifteen, and with her Ruskin fell violently in love. The attachment was encouraged by Ruskin's father (though not by his mother), and Mr. Domecq on his side was favourable; but the shy and serious boy failed to commend himself to the

[1] In addition to the ten numbers of *Friendship's Offering* (1835–44), the Annuals, etc., containing Ruskin's verses (on first publication) are *The Spiritual Times* (1830), *The Amaranth* (1839), *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. (1839), Heath's *Book of Beauty* (1845 and 1846), and *The Keepsake* (1845 and 1846).

[2] See, *e.g.* *Athenæum*, No. 520 (Oct. 14, 1837), No. 572 (Oct. 13, 1838), No. 625 (Oct. 19, 1839), No. 890 (Nov. 16, 1844); *Literary Gazette*, No. 1134 (Oct. 13, 1838). For extracts, etc., see below, notes on pp. 25, 58, 71, 102, 124, 132, 229. Ruskin's father, in a letter to W. H. Harrison (Jan. 26, 1839), mentions another "symptom of popularity": "His lines 'Remembrance' (p. 23), from *Friendship's Offering*, 1837–38, I see in a cheap almanack this year, and his mother was surprised by the same in a *Magasin des Modes*, taken up at a milliner's."

[3] It may be noted that the years of Ruskin's repute in this sort were those of Tennyson's silence. His first volumes appeared in 1827, 1830, 1832; no others, till 1842.

[4] Mrs. Richmond Ritchie (Miss Thackeray) has given a pleasant glimpse of another member of the family: "The writer can picture to herself something of the charm of these most charming sisters, for once, by chance, travelling on Lake Leman, she found herself watching a lady who sat at the steamer's end, a beautiful young woman, all dressed in pale grey, with a long veil floating on the wind, who sat motionless and absorbed, looking towards the distant hills; not unlike the vision of some guiding, wistful Ariel at the prow, while the steamer sped its way between the banks. The story of the French sisters had gained an added interest from the remembrance of those dark

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sparkling Adèle. In after years Ruskin told the story of this love passage with insouciant raillery,[1] but at the time it was very real, and profoundly affected him. In the Poems we may trace the strength of his passion, and when the final disappointment came, the unreproachful sadness of memory and its pang. The first visit of Adèle and her sisters to Herne Hill was in the first two months of 1836. Ruskin celebrates her "glory" and her "grace" (p. 16), and lingers over her "last smile" (p. 18). She departs; he sends her "Good-night" across the sea (p. 17). Her name is named in company (p. 461); he falters for a moment, but nerves himself to be firm (p. 465). These lines—here first published—have real dignity and compression. Occasional verses to Adèle in absence will be found in the poems of both 1837 and 1838—such are the song on p. 467, "The Mirror" (p. 19), "Nature Untenanted" (p. 466), and "Remembrance" (p. 23). In 1838 Adèle was sent to school in England, and Ruskin saw her again in August of that year; she and her sisters spent the following Christmas at Herne Hill; Ruskin was as devoted, and she as lightly laughing, as before. This second visit is reflected in several verses of the time. The song, "Though thou hast not a feeling for one Who is torn by too many for thee" (p. 78), sufficiently tells the story. Other pieces of the same date and motive are the song on p. 76, "Memory" (p. 80), "The Name" (p. 81), the canzonet on p. 88, "Fragment from a Meteorological Journal" (p. 85). But early in 1839 negotiations were entered into by the young lady's family for a marriage between Adèle and Baron Duquesne, a rich and handsome young Frenchman. The fact was for a time kept from Ruskin's knowledge by his parents, who feared that the disappointment would interfere with his studies at Oxford. The verses, "To Adèle" (p. 110), written in the first half of 1839, are not yet without all hope. At Christmas 1839, she and her sisters were again at Herne Hill. It is not clear whether Ruskin at this time knew the truth or not. The negotiations for Adèle's marriage continued, and it took place in March 1840. The long poem, "Farewell" (p. 193), is dated as if on the eve of their last meeting and

lovely eyes, that charming countenance; for afterward, when I knew her better, the lady told me that her mother had been a Domecq, and had once lived with her three sisters in Ruskin's home. Circumstances had divided them in after days, but all the children of the family in turn had been brought up to know Mr. Ruskin by name, and to love and appreciate his books. The lady sent him many messages by me, which I delivered in after days, when, alas! it was from Mr. Ruskin himself I learned that the beautiful traveller—Isabelle, he called her—had passed away before her time to those distant hills where all our journeys end" (*Records of Tennyson, Ruskin, and Browning*, 1892, pp. 98–99). Mrs. Ritchie's friend was Isabelle, daughter of Diane Domecq (Comtesse de Maison), the eldest of the sisters, for whom see a reference in *Præterita*, i. ch. xi. § 226.

[1] *Præterita*, i. ch. x.

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parting.[1] The quotation from the *Agamemnon* which he prefixed to it sufficiently indicates the feeling which inspired the verses:—

> "Come visions, sweet and sad, and bearing pain
> Of hopings vain—
> Void, void and vain, for scarce the sleeping sight
> Has seen its own delight,
> When thro' the grasps of love that bid it stay
> It vanishes away
> On silent wings that roam adown the ways of sleep."[2]

This "Farewell," in the style of Shelley, is perhaps the best of the love poems. It was, as we learn from the correspondence between Ruskin's father and W. H. Harrison, a particular "pet" with its author. He took unusual pains with it, polishing it and polishing again. It only fails of the effect of high poetry by too many traces of the file. This piece and "Agonia" (p. 207) are the last of the poems dedicated to her. He takes his leave in grief, but without bitterness. The spirit of the last pieces to Adèle is that of the earlier lines mentioned above:—

> "'Twas but a moment's falter, it is gone,
> I am firm now, I have mine armour on. . . .
> I am all rock; nor word nor thought again
> Shall shake the endurance of the clasping pain."

In addition to the poems addressed directly to Adèle, Ruskin's early love inspired also, at the beginning of it, sundry other literary exercises. Such was *Leoni*, as explained in Vol. I. (p. xlvii.). Another piece, included in the present volume, which had a similar origin, may here be noticed on account of this connexion, although it belongs to the third Part in our arrangement of the poems. *Marcolini* was "a tragedy on a Venetian subject, in which the sorrows of my soul were to be enshrined in immortal verse."[3] Ruskin was at work on this in the summer of 1836. It was not finished; his literary energy was much dissipated in that year (see below, p. 449). The fragment seems, however, to be worth including among his poetical *juvenilia*. It shows greater power than many of the other pieces, and power in a different direction than that indicated by most of them. It cannot indeed be said that the fragment discloses any skill in dramatic construction; but the characters are well

[1] The date printed in *Friendship's Offering* is September 1839. The actual parting was, however, on Dec. 28, 1839 (see below, p. 204 *n*).

[2] E. D. A. Morshead's translation (*The House of Atreus*, in the "Golden Treasury" series, 1901, p. 20). The tragedies of Æschylus often furnished Ruskin with mottoes and phrases at this period; see below, pp. 36, 45, 114, and see *Præterita*, i. ch. xii. § 260. *Cf.* also *Modern Painters*, pref. to 2nd ed. § 16.

[3] *Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 209.

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distinguished, and they display themselves in animated and appropriate dialogue. There are passages also which show that Ruskin could catch Shakespeare's style as cleverly as in other pieces he caught Scott's and Byron's and Shelley's. Whatever else may be thought of Ruskin's poetical apprenticeship, it induced him at any rate to the close study of great masters, until by experiments in many sorts, he gradually found his proper medium, and formed a style of his own.

The Herodotean pieces were partly undertaken as a relief and change of subject from the absorbing preoccupation of his amatory poems. "The Tears of Psammenitus" was written, he told a College Friend, "in two hours, as a relief from strong and painful excitement."[1] His father complained that the Scythian pieces savoured too strongly of "the shambles." In most of them there is certainly a note of gruesome realism which is in marked contrast to Ruskin's maturer style.[2] It is easy to see the effect of much reading of Byron in the succession of bloody, desperate, or love-sick heroes with whose deeds and passions Ruskin dramatically identified himself.[3] But the Herodotean setting selected for so many of Ruskin's poems also sprung from his keen interest in that historian, of all Greek authors the one to whom Ruskin took most kindly at Oxford. "My Herodotean history, at any rate," he wrote in 1886, "got well settled down into me, and remains a greatly precious possession to this day."[4] The metrical exercises which he gave himself helped thus to settle Herodotus down into him, and he saw in that prince of storytellers much picturesque and dramatic material (see Vol. I. p. 437). Schlegel (in his "Arion"), before Ruskin's time, and Matthew Arnold (in "Mycerinus"), after him, went to the same source.

The Poems sent in by Ruskin as an undergraduate at Oxford for the Newdigate Prize are three in number, for he competed twice unsuccessfully—in 1837 with "The Gipsies," in 1838 with "The Exile of St. Helena"—before winning the prize in 1839 with "Salsette and Elephanta." Prize

[1] See Vol. I. p. 437, and compare *ibid.* p. 444.

[2] "During all his boyhood and youth there were moments of weakness when he allowed himself to be carried away by a sort of nightmare, the reaction from healthy delight in natural beauty. In later life he learned to put limits to art, and to refuse the merely horrible as its material—at least, to confine it to necessary revelations of actual suffering. As an undergraduate, however, writing for effect, he gave free vein to the morbid imaginations to which his unhappy *affaire de cœur* and the mental excitement of the period predisposed him" (Collingwood's *Life*, 1900, p. 70). See also note on p. 57, below.

[3] See *Præterita*, i. ch. xi. § 228, and *Stones of Venice*, iii. ch. v. § 2.

[4] *Præterita*, i. ch. xi. § 228. References to Herodotus are frequent in Ruskin's works; see, *e.g. Modern Painters*, vol. iii. ch. iii. § 21, ch. vii. § 21, ch. xiii. § 27, and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter xii. In *The Elements of Drawing*, § 258, Herodotus is mentioned among the seven authors indispensable in any sound scheme of education. Ruskin also read Thucydides with great admiration (*Præterita*, *ibid.* § 237).

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poems are built much on the same pattern, and Ruskin was not altogether well equipped for the rules of the competition. He meant to succeed, and his parents expected him to carry all before him, but he scorned the wisdom of the wary in such matters. Among the hints given him by his tutor, Canon Dale, on going up to Oxford, was some good advice to competitors for the Newdigate:—

> "Then he gave me (wrote Ruskin to his father on Dec. 24, 1836) some directions for gaining Oxford poetical prizes, which were very excellent directions for writing bad poetry. One was to imitate Pope. Now, when I write poetry I like to imitate nobody. However, one piece of counsel was excellent, viz. to write two poems—one in my own style, the other polished and spoiled up to their standard, so that if I failed to carry all before me with my own, I might be able to fall back upon the other."

If Ruskin did not literally carry out this latter counsel, yet the reader will observe, on comparing the several pieces, that in "Salsette and Elephanta" he polished in the orthodox fashion, whereas in "The Gipsies" he went his own way. In the case of "The Gipsies," Ruskin had a formidable competitor in Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, whom, however, he ran close for the prize. An eminent writer has made a comparison, somewhat disparaging to Stanley, of the two poems:—

> "Those who care to see how a clever man may beat a man of genius may compare Dean Stanley's 'Gipsies' with Ruskin's. Stanley was no more a poet than was Ruskin, and had not a tenth part of Ruskin's poetic spirit. But Stanley had the journalist's *flair* for hitting the taste of the day, and appealing to the sentiments of his readers, instead of expatiating on his own."[1]

Stanley's poem was undoubtedly better calculated than Ruskin's to hit the taste of the examiners, especially when Keble, as Professor of Poetry, was chief among them. But it seems unnecessary to disparage Stanley's poem, which is among the best of its kind, and contains lines that will live, in order to account for Ruskin's failure. His "Gipsies" may or may not be the better poem; it is certainly not the better "prize poem." Ruskin's father, whose intense admiration for his son's talents never conquered his own shrewd common sense, put both the philosophy of prize poems and the besetting sin of Ruskin's verses in an admirable letter to W. H. Harrison (April 7, 1837):—

> "My son left for Oxford this morning, and had not time to reply to your kind notes. Some corrections he must and others he will, I doubt

[1] Frederic Harrison's *John Ruskin* (in the "English Men of Letters" series), 1902, p. 35.

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not, adopt. The truth is, that verses taken at random from his poetic heap are just about as fit for the public eye as a block of marble just starting into form would be for the model room of Somerset House. I was greatly pleased and much obliged by the business-like manner in which you dissected his trifle; such criticism is of more value to him than any ten of his best efforts will ever be to you. I cannot get him to correct or revise anything; and if he ever aspires to contend for a Poetry Prize at Oxford, he must fail, for this reason, that there it is not the poem having the greatest number of beauties, but that which betrays fewest faults, that carries the day. I trust your note may make my son begin to think how very far he may go wrong by indulging in unchecked, unpruned, unamended composition."

Ruskin took much pains with "The Exile of St. Helena," the subject set in the following year, but the poem was not among his happier pieces; he was very properly beaten, as he said, by his old school-fellow, J. H. Dart.[1] At the third try he was successful. His "Salsette and Elephanta" is less interesting than his "Gipsies," but it is far more smooth and polished. It "betrays the fewest faults." Its argument also conforms more closely to the then accepted models.[2] Nor is it without "beauties" of its own. The real Ruskin flashes out in occasional passages, as in the lines:—

> "Yes—he shall fall, though once his throne was set
> Where the high heaven and crested mountains met,
> Though distant shone with many an azure gem
> The glacier glory of his diadem."

The exotic scenery of the poem has been known to perplex some readers. "Majestic Dharavee," "Canarah's hill," and the "peepul's purple shade" carry with them suggestions of Bon Gaultier's "Kaftan and Kalpac have gone to their rest," and of Edward Lear's "purple nullahs" and "silvery Goreewallahs." But for this the subject was responsible.[3]

Ruskin's success with "Salsette and Elephanta" won him favour in the

[1] See *Præterita*, ii. ch. viii. § 151, and below, p. 45 *n*.

[2] Stanley's "Gipsies" concludes with the restoration of all Wanderers to the fold of the Church; Ruskin's "Salsette and Elephanta," with heathen India deserting "the darkened path her Fathers trod," and seeking redemption in Christianity. Mr. Goldwin Smith is said to have given the following programme of a prize poem to a competitor whose subject was "The Stuarts": "The Stuarts will never be restored—The Jews will—Salem!" (F. Harrison, *l.c.*, p. 24.)

[3] Cases are known, I believe, in which readers have gone through the poem without deriving any clear idea of who or what were Salsette and Elephanta; therein not being worse at fault perhaps than Ruskin himself, who once confessed that he had "waded through 'The Revolt of Islam'" without ever discovering "who revolted against whom, or what" (*Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 210). It may be well, therefore, to say at once that Salsette and Elephanta are islands lying off Bombay, with remains of cave-temples sacred to Hindu divinities.

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eyes of the College and University authorities. Keble, discharging the usual offices of the Professor of Poetry on these occasions, "asked me to cut out all my best bits."[1] Dean Gaisford—previously "a sternly throned and wicked Anathema"—was gracious, and coached the prizeman for his recitation in the theatre (June 12, 1839). The Censor, in his speech at the end of term, made very complimentary allusions to the honour which a gentleman-commoner had done to the House. The following letter (preserved at Brantwood) gives a lively account of the speech:—

> My Dearest Father,—I am in a great hurry, going to Athlone's, but I thought the Censor's speech particularly eloquent last night, and my mother can't remember the substance thereof. After a few remarks on the Class List, he began to speak of a certain *insignis juvenis—ex superiori ordine*—of the upper rank of his college—uniting an intense degree of intellect and morality, who having acquired extensive knowledge of men and manners and natural phenomena during protracted travel—uniting refined taste with extensive knowledge of polite literature—*summo* something or other—and then *maxima facundiâ atque lepore*, etc.—had been successful in *certamine poetico—victoriam meritam*, etc.—to the great joy of his college friends and tutors. Then he proceeded to compare this Juvenis to Alexander the Great and Pompey, though I couldn't catch the points of resemblance, and wound up by returning thanks to him in the name of his college, and saying they expected higher honour from him yet. All this in Latin, and a great deal more which I could not hear. I want a brown, rough, bright-eyed brute of a new dog.—Ever your most affectionate son,
>
> J. Ruskin.

The recitation of the Prize Poem at Commemoration was a great event in the domestic circle. His mother was too nervous to be present; but without need, for Ruskin got through the ordeal very well,[2] to his father's infinite delight. The recitation was of accidental interest as bringing the

[1] *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 193.

[2] Among the visitors was Baroness Bunsen, who gave the following account of the recitations in a letter to her brother (July 2, 1839): "The new Doctors having been admitted, the young men who had obtained the prizes recited their poems and essays—one of a sort, Latin and English. This was rather long . . . but the English poem interested me, on the superstitions of India and their fall before the Cross—by Ruskin, a young man of promise. They tell me, too, the Latin was good, by Arthur Stanley, a pupil of Arnold" (*The Life and Letters of Frances, Baroness Bunsen*, by A. J. C. Hare, 1879, vol. i. p. 514). Stanley on this occasion won the Latin essay, on the subject, *Quænam sint erga Rempublicam Academicæ officia?* Ruskin, in conversation in 1881, said that the recitation "quite turned his head." He added, however, that "The Gipsies" was the best of the poems he sent in for the Newdigate.

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young author to the notice of a master in literature, in whose spirit of "walking with nature" Ruskin was to undertake his principal work. "There were 2000 ladies and gentlemen to hear it," records Ruskin's father proudly in a letter to W. H. Harrison; "he was not at all nervous, and it went all very well off. The notice taken of him is quite extraordinary." It must be doubted, however, whether the Newdigate Prize Poem was so much the attraction as the conferment of an honorary degree upon the Lake Poet. Wordsworth's reception on the occasion by the undergraduates was most enthusiastic.[1] He in his turn took kindly notice of the young prize poet. "We were asked," continues Ruskin's father, "to meet Wordsworth yesterday, and getting next to him, I had a delightful hour." Ruskin, it will be remembered, took a passage from Wordsworth for the motto of *Modern Painters*, and of the first two volumes of that book Wordsworth was among the earliest and most appreciative readers.[2]

Ruskin, it will be remembered, was threatened with consumption in May 1840, while reading for his degree at Oxford, and went abroad. On his return to England at the end of June 1841, after a further cure at Leamington, he resumed reading for the Schools. He passed his final examinations in May 1842, and then again went to Switzerland (May–August). *Modern Painters* had been in his mind since 1840–41, and was published in May 1843. During these years he was absorbed, it will be seen, in other pursuits—now, as always, he was sketching busily, as well as writing; and his poetical production was very small. It consisted either in finishing a piece already begun, namely, the very much "Broken Chain," or in versifying impressions and descriptions of natural scenery which he was soon to treat in prose. The several poems on Mont Blanc and Chamouni (pp. 222, 233, 236, 237) may be compared with many a chapter in *Modern Painters;* the "Madonna dell' Acqua" (p. 227) with many in *The Stones of Venice*. Close observation of nature may be discerned even in Ruskin's earliest verses, but in these more mature pieces there is a note of reverential intensity, and a colouring of the landscape with reflections from human life, which are peculiarly characteristic. They form a fitting prelude to the later volumes of *Modern Painters*, and express with utmost clearness, as he said, the temper in which he began the most serious work of his life.[3] The greater intensity of feeling gives to these pieces a corresponding intensity of expression. They are certainly the best verses

[1] There is an account of it in the *Life and Letters of F. W. Robertson*, by Stopford Brooke, 1874, p. 17.

[2] See Introduction to Vol. III. of this edition.

[3] See below, note on p. 234.

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that Ruskin wrote. There are notes in them—distinct, if not well sustained—of the magic of poetry which haunt the memory. The "unrestrained facility," noted by Ruskin's father from the first as his son's besetting danger in versification, often gives place in the later pieces to concentration, which misses the effect of the best poetry only because the form betrays some rhetorical effort.[1] But Ruskin, as we have already seen, felt that his vein in this sort had been exhausted, and was recognising with increasing conviction that his medium was prose. To ask why Ruskin was not a poet, were to ask why there are diversities of gifts. He had to the full the poetic sensibility, but he lacked the poet's constructive imagination, and his mind was too discursive for the restraints of poetic form. His homage was paid to Athena, the Queen of the Air, rather than to Athena Chalinitis, the Restrainer.[2] An eminent critic in discussing the "truth and beauty" of an Alpine description in *Modern Painters* has only one objection to suggest: "that Mr. Ruskin is there trying to make prose do more than it can perfectly do; that what he is there attempting he will never, except in poetry, be able to accomplish to his own entire satisfaction."[3] The reader who peruses this volume before coming to *Modern Painters* will see that the actual process was the reverse. Ruskin sought to accomplish in prose what he found that he could not to his satisfaction express in verse.[4] "I perceived finally," he wrote, "that I could express nothing I had to say, rightly, in that manner; and the peace of mind which returns to me as the principal character of this opening journey (1845) was perhaps, in part, the result of this extremely wholesome conclusion."[5]

To his father, Ruskin's abandonment of poetry was a sore disappointment. "I wish," he wrote to his old friend W. H. Harrison (July 16, 1845), "that his mother may not be right after all, and our son prove but

[1] See especially the first four lines of "The Alps seen from Marengo" (p. 232).

[2] See C. E. Norton's preface to *The Queen of the Air*. Mr. Collingwood has noted, as one of the causes which led Ruskin to abandon poetry, the incompatibility which he found between the sentimental style of his adoption and the sub-humorous strand of irony which mixed with his thought; see note cited below, p. 42.

[3] Matthew Arnold on "The Literary Influence of Academies" in *Essays in Criticism*.

[4] Yet Ruskin would in another sense have agreed with Matthew Arnold's criticism. See Appendix i. to *The Two Paths*: "No description that I have ever given of anything is worth four lines of Tennyson." He once said at one of the breakfasts in his rooms at Corpus to the Hincksey diggers that he would sacrifice nearly all he had written to have written Tennyson's line, "The city sparkles like a grain of salt" (the last line of "Will.")

[5] *Præterita*, ii. ch. vi. § 109. See also *Sesame and Lilies*, § 117, and *Ethics of the Dust* (end of preface of 1877), in which he speaks of himself as "no poet," and not pretending "to any share in the real power of Vision possessed by great poets." Yet it may be doubted whether Ruskin did not owe a good deal to these early exercises in metrical form, and even lose something by abandoning the discipline.

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a poet in prose." The mother was right, and Ruskin's choice was final. The father determined to console himself by raising a memorial to his hopes. "I want," he wrote to Harrison (March 8, 1847), "to get the best of all he has ever penned selected and printed in a good type, but not published; in fact, to be merely called 'Poems, etc., printed but not published by J. R.' They are worth collecting for a family Record, and the expense would not be great, if I could get his own consent; but I believe I should have both him and his mama against the project."

Ruskin seems to have lent only a lukewarm support to the project, which was carried out three years later in the volume which is now reprinted as Part I. of the present volume.

II

With the autumn of 1845 Ruskin's serious verse-writing came to an end, but from time to time he wrote a piece for some special occasion. The first piece in the second section of this volume, not hitherto published, is an example in that sort; it was written for a girl's birthday in May 1847. The two next pieces, with an adaptation from Scott, were written for the girls' school at Winnington, of which some account will be found in the introduction to the volume in this edition containing *The Ethics of the Dust*. One of the two—"The Zodiac Song"—has not been printed before. Late in life, from about 1880 onwards, Ruskin amused himself with composing tunes and short songs to fit them. The fine lines, "Trust thou thy love," were written for that purpose. He also continued for many years after 1845 to send occasional rhyming letters to his friends. Some examples were cited by him in *Præterita*, and were collected therefrom in the 1891 edition of his *Poems*. It does not seem necessary to repeat them here.[1] Some nursery and other rhymes of little interest were also included in the 1891 edition. They will be found, together with Ruskin's edition of "Dame Wiggins of Lee" (to which he added some stanzas of his own), in an Appendix to the present volume.

[1] In the ed. of 1891 they were given in vol. ii. at pp. 323–325: see *Præterita*, ii. ch. x. § 191; ch. viii. § 163. A paraphrase of a well-known couplet in "Hudibras," given at vol. ii. p. 334 of the *Poems*, 1891, occurs in *Præterita*, ii. ch. viii. § 157.

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III

In the third section we return to Ruskin's *juvenilia* in verse, to which some general reference has already been made in the introduction to the preceding volume (p. xxvi.). There is some overlapping, so far as the chronological arrangement is concerned, for the *Poems*, 1850 (our Part I.), included two or three early pieces (written in 1833–35), and, on the other hand, did not include all the poems of 1836 which had previously been published. But, roughly speaking, the line of demarcation is clear. The *Poems*, 1850, are those written by Ruskin as an undergraduate and later; the *juvenilia* (Part III.) are those written in the nursery and the schoolroom. Naturally, their main interest is biographical. The first thing which must strike every reader of Ruskin's nursery verses is their precocity; and after that, his fluency, his facility in imitating Scott and Byron (and at a later date Shelley), and his early bent to the tastes and studies which he was destined to pursue throughout his life. The piece, placed by his father at the beginning of the *Poems*, 1850—"I weary for the torrent leaping" (p. 3)—has some glaring technical defects, but a note of sincerity in the love of nature not usual in a boy of fourteen. Still more remarkable are the Lines on Skiddaw and Derwent Water (p. 265), written when Ruskin was no more than nine, and published when he was eleven. Already he was a close observer of the changeful beauty of the clouds. Ruskin used to say in after life that his true function was that of a seer; of the man who has seen, and can tell others how they may see also. His own eyes were fixed on nature before he was in his teens. Indications of the boy's unaffected love of mountains, clouds, and stones will be perceived throughout his juvenile pieces. It may be noticed also how travel among beautiful scenery stimulated his powers of composition, and how tenacious was his memory of natural effects that he had observed. Places that he was to love throughout life, scenes that he was to analyse and describe, are seized upon from the first.[1] His spiritual affinity with Turner in the recognition of particular effects of nature also comes out in many striking ways, as, for instance, in his admiration for the scenery of the Meuse, which was to be the subject of so many of Turner's later studies.[2] The

[1] It is interesting to notice in Ruskin's diaries of foreign travel how often his memory recurred to the scenery of the Lake Country, which inspired his boyish muse. Thus at Naples (March 16, 1841) he says:—

> "Left Naples to-day, disgusted with everything but Vesuvius, who rose in a bold grey mass like Saddleback."

So again, of a walk up the hills from Pagani (near Amalfi), he speaks (March 10) of "such heathy heights as made me happy in thoughts of Cumberland."

[2] See p. 349, and *cf.* note on p. 362.

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biographical and other notes supplied to the several poems are intended to call attention to points of this kind. Of Ruskin's precocity in intellectual curiosity, perhaps the best instance is the set of blank verses on "Time" (p. 257), in which the author wonders, with a droll mixture of metaphysics and toy-shop recollection, whether time is "a figure or a sense." A boy who could amuse himself with such speculations at the age of seven was clearly destined to develop remarkable powers of analysis. In actual precocity of achievement there is no piece among the *juvenilia* more remarkable than "The Site of Babylon" (p. 329). The first stanza might almost pass for one out of Rossetti's "Burden of Nineveh"—a poem, by the way, which Ruskin in after years greatly admired. Ruskin was eleven when he wrote his lines. He seems to have set himself as a boy to treat all kinds of subjects, and to try all methods. It is interesting to find him, at the age of eight, already classifying his pieces, with Wordsworthian method, under heads, such as "Poetry Discriptive" (*sic*). In the chronological list of poems the titles of the unpublished verses are included in order to show the wide range of his interests (see p. 585). "The human mind does not always blossom at the same period," but those who compare Ruskin's early verses with the *juvenilia* of many men destined to become great poets—with Shelley's, for instance—will find it easy to understand the hopes that Ruskin's parents entertained of poetic eminence for their son.

Among so much that is serious and (in intention, if not in execution) old in Ruskin's *juvenilia*, it is refreshing to find occasional evidence that the boy was a boy after all. In the invocation to the Sun (p. 260), the bathos—"At the hot noon Oft have I worked *to make my garden nice*"—reminds us that he played sometimes in the garden; and there is a rhyming letter of 1831 which records a visit to the pantomime, and gloats over a supper of "puff-tarts, ham, and oyster patties."

There is biographical interest of another kind in these juvenile verses. As we read them, we are enabled to realise vividly the picture drawn in *Præterita* (i. ch. ii. § 44), of the boy seated at his little table in the parlour deep in the immensities, while his elders were engaged in mundane pursuits. The world in which he lived and moved and had his being was from his earliest years the world of art and letters. On his tenth birthday he received some presents which he specially valued:—

> "There never were gifts (he writes to his father, Feb. 21, 1829) more useful to me than—shall I enumerate them?—my pens, my instruments, my box, my pencils, my portfolios, my paints, my atlas and my paper."

His literary and artistic efforts were discursive, but his industry was

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prodigious. He was never happier—then or in after life—than when he had a dozen books on hand at once :—

> "I do believe (he writes to his father on May 10, 1829) that the last year of my life was the happiest; and shall I tell you why? Because I have had more to do than I could do without cramming and ramming, and wishing days were longer and sheets of paper broader. . . I do think, indeed am sure, that in common things it is having too much to do which constitutes happiness, and too little, unhappiness."
>
> "I find time now (he writes three years later, Feb. 20, 1832) still more scarce than ever; for what with Livy and Lucian, Homer, French, drawings, arithmetic, globe work and mineralogical dictionary, I positively am all flurry and hurry." [1]

The reader will be able to trace, by the division of the *juvenilia* into years, and by the notes supplied to each year, how indefatigable was the young author's pen. It at any rate amused him, he pleaded when domestic critics proved unkind. "Mamma says," he wrote (March 6, 1830), "it's wasting my time,

> And writing an enormous screed
> Which nobody will ever read.
> But allow it so to be,
> Then it is amusing me. . . .
> May I not myself amuse
> In writing nonsense if I choose?
> May I not employ my brain
> In calling past delights again?"

The unhappiest hour of the day, if we may judge from the spirited protest, in Byronic stanzas, against "Bed Time" (p. 326), was when mamma's "*imperativus modus*" prevented the beginning of some fresh piece of literary composition.

It should be noted further that many of Ruskin's early "Works" were, like his later, illustrated by the author. A specimen page of the best of these illustrated *juvenilia* is given below (p. 356). A very much earlier one is preserved at Brantwood.[2] This is entitled—

> The Puppet show; or Amusing Characters for Children. With coloured plates by John Ruskin. 1829.

An earlier work still was "Harry and Lucy Concluded," of which Ruskin

[1] The letter from which the above extracts are taken is among those preserved at Brantwood.

[2] The book is bound (evidently after it was written) in half-leather. It was found after Ruskin's death in the possession of the son-in-law of his valet (also deceased), and was catalogued for sale at Sotheby's (1900), but was purchased privately before the sale at £105 by Mrs. Severn, for preservation among other MSS. of the kind at Brantwood.

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published the title-page in *Præterita* (i. ch. iii. § 61). There is a passage in that "work" referring to "a bright thought which came into Harry's mind, he would make a Punch's Show or Pantomine (*sic*) to please his father." The thought was carried out in "The Puppet Show," written and designed when Ruskin was between nine and ten years of age. The writing is in "print" hand throughout. There is an introduction, and twenty-nine characters are then brought forward in succession. It is not without curious interest that the first of them is "George of England":—

"I am the bravest Knight of all,
My armour is of gold;
O'er all the field death spreads his pall
When I my wrath unfold."

and so on for four more stanzas. "My power it will serve to save" is another line. It was under the banner of St. George that Ruskin was to set himself, forty years later, to his scheme of political salvation. Each character is illustrated by two coloured drawings. St. George is beautifully drawn: he rides on a dappled horse, trampling on a green dragon, and wears golden armour with a crimson plume and cloak. Above is the motto: "St. George for England." Another character is Dame Wiggins of Lee (see below, p. 526). The influence of Cruikshank's etchings in "Grimm" (*German Popular Stories*, 1824–26) is very perceptible in many of the drawings.[1] One of them, the figure of a brownie, is copied directly from Cruikshank's central figure in "The Elves and the Shoemaker."

Ruskin in after life often alluded to his foible for discursive industry. The same ironical note is struck in his early letters. He warns his father in absence (March 6, 1830) that he will know to his cost on his return how busy his son has been. "I am already," he writes, "in the fourth hundred of the second book, cantering away to Borrowdale and Bowderstone and Buttermere" (see "Iteriad," below, p. 298). So again, a year later (Feb. 28, 1831), he writes: "You will be smothered under a mountain of words. . . . You will groan under the weight of lines, the sea of rhymes, which I shall load you with on your return." To Ruskin's father the load was his deepest pleasure. His dearest wish, as we have already seen, was that his son should become famous as a poet. Several of Ruskin's early verses which remain unpublished consist of rhyming letters to his father. There was always one for New Year's Day (generally enclosing some other poems from the author's stock), and another for his father's birthday. And often, when the father was away on his business tours, the son sent

[1] See *Præterita*, i. ch. iv. § 82, and Ruskin's preface to John Camden Hotten's collection of *German Popular Stories* (1868).

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him letters in rhyme. There is something very pleasant in the relations in which father and son stood. Sometimes, it must be confessed, there is a note of strain in the boy's effusions; he seems to be pumping up the lines with effort, and turning out sentiments for effect. But more often the rhyming letters pour themselves out with the unrestraint of comradeship. The trivialities of home and the pranks of the schoolroom are told with much spirit, and often with humorous insight into character. Nor is the boy ever afraid of pouring out his deeper thoughts and fancies into his father's ear. At other times he chaffs the wine-merchant freely about his business,[1] and hits off the foibles of both his parents. The elder Ruskin was a keen man of business, but his heart was not "always in his office," and often in the rhyming letters we seem, as it were, to catch father and son in the act of devising confidential schemes for sentimental tours on the Continent. Who can wonder that the father was proud of such a son? It appears from notes on some of the MSS. of Ruskin's *juvenilia*, as also from correspondence, that the father was in the habit of sending round to his friends any of the effusions which struck him as peculiarly clever. "We think him clever," he writes in reply to a friend's admiration, "and his masters pronounce his talents great for his age. . . . If the Almighty preserves the Boy to me, I am richly blessed." The father used also to carry about with him favourite poems by his son, and his old friend W. H. Harrison, wanting to make an acceptable present, had proofs of Ruskin's contributions to *Friendship's Offering* bound up for his father. The volume accompanied the father on his tours. He eagerly collected, too, any favourable notices in the press of his son's verses.[2] When a hostile criticism appeared, the father was convinced that there were "conspiracies" afoot and "unrelenting foes" abroad. He tried to act, like George

[1] There is a characteristic touch in this connexion in one of the letters to W. H. Harrison from Ruskin's father (Jan. 30, 1837): "His treatment of the City altogether shocks my feelings. He knows the shape of every needle round Mont Blanc, and could not tell you now where Threadneedle Street is."

[2] Yet, as already said, the parental admiration of Ruskin's father was always accompanied by dignity and common sense. On one occasion the editor of *Friendship's Offering* wanted to parade his contributor, "J. R.," as an Oxford prize poet. Ruskin's father would not have it:—

> "I do indulge a hope," he wrote (Aug. 6, 1839), "that he may, if spared, become a full-grown poet; but as we can no longer pass him off for the little phenomenon, I am afraid of letting the kindness of friends usher him into the world of literature as any great phenomenon till we feel our way a little. He has done nothing yet to entitle us to introduce him as the wonderful Mr. So and So, and from my respect for *Letters* I have a strong dislike to claiming public attention through any other means than the positive merit of the production submitted to its perusal. I shall rejoice if the public tell me that my son *is* a poet, but if they do not, and I should nevertheless think he is, we may as well keep the secret." (See also below, note on p. 101.)

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Lewes to George Eliot, as a screen to his son against unsympathetic notices; but here he was not always successful, and the precautions were soon seen to be unnecessary. "My son," he writes to W. H. Harrison (Dec. 25, 1840), with accurate foresight, "is more likely to send the critics' arrows back upon them some day than to be mortally wounded by them." Ruskin himself smiled a little at his father's sensitiveness. "My father," he writes to the same correspondent (Nov. 24, 1839), "had an awful fit of *Literary Gazette* indigestion last year, and has some idea of bringing the poems into a state of perfection *far* above all criticism. But I shall let them alone; it would be a clean ceiling that flies couldn't walk on."[1]

The Birthday Addresses from Ruskin to his father continued to the end of the period covered by his *juvenilia*. A few lines from the latest of them (1837) may be given:—

> "Wishing your years, dear Father, may delay
> Like a bright river, 'midst green fields and gay,
> While dewy leaves, and blossoms, richly spread,
> Gem the bright borders of its bending bed,—
> Calm in its current,—crystal in its course,—
> Mild in its motion,—gentle in its force,—
> Long in its flow,—and lovely in its shore,
> And ending in sweet peace for evermore."

Ruskin's mother plays a less conspicuous part in the story of his literary boyhood, as we may read it in these *juvenilia*. Not less sympathetic at heart than his father, she had the maternal prudence. It is she who utters the note of warning: "Mama is continually saying that I shall weary out my brain."[2]

The *text of this volume* follows in the case of Part I. that of the privately printed *Poems*, 1850. That edition was very carefully revised by Ruskin's father and W. H. Harrison, with occasional reference, on doubtful points, to Ruskin himself. In the case of Part II., pieces which were included in the edition of 1891 are reprinted therefrom. The "Zodiac Song," hitherto unpublished, is printed from the author's MS.; the Song for a Birthday, from a copy in the possession of Mr. George Allen. The text of the *juvenilia* in Part III. is, in accordance with the general rule of this edition, that last revised by the author—this is sometimes the published version in the various Annuals, and sometimes the author's fair copy. (Pieces first published in 1891 did not receive the

[1] This refers to the unfavourable review published in that journal on Nov. 23, 1839; see below, p. 102 *n*.

[2] From a letter by Ruskin to his father, preserved at Brantwood.

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author's revision.) One general exception, however, has been made. In *Friendship's Offering*, and in the author's fair copies, the stanzas were generally not indented; the indentations, introduced in the edition of 1891, have been here retained, as being more in accordance with now established usage, and also as more suitable to the typographical structure of the pages. Emendations made by the editor in 1891 have been retained where they are necessary for the sense; these are included in square brackets [ ]. Other emendations introduced in that edition have not been followed in the text, though they are mentioned in footnotes. It seemed desirable in this edition to let the text appear as the author wrote it. The MS. of all the published *juvenilia* exists, and of many pieces there are two or more versions. The MSS. have, here as elsewhere, been collated for this edition, but it has not seemed worth while to treat these early verses with more importance than they possess, by any critical apparatus of manuscript variants. Occasionally, however, where a point of substantial interest suggested itself, reference has been made to the various MS. sources, and variations between different printed texts are fully noted. In the edition of 1891 a careful enumeration was given of the MSS. of Ruskin's *juvenilia* preserved at Brantwood. This is reprinted, with alterations and additions suggested by a fresh recension, in Appendix III. A chronological list of the verses, published and unpublished, is given in Appendix IV.

The *order of the poems* is as far as possible chronological in each Part. The external evidence for the dating of the verses is fourfold. The most obvious, but not the most conclusive, is, in the case of published pieces, the date of publication. In this connexion it should be remembered that the Annuals in which most of the verses appeared were published in the early autumn of the year preceding their date. Further, the date gives no certain indication of the time when the author composed the pieces. The editors may have had (and sometimes certainly did have) Ruskin's "copy" in hand a year or two before they used it; at other times, when they applied to him for a contribution, he may have sent in a piece which he had written some while before, though, on the other hand, some of the pieces were written expressly to order (see below, pp. 189, 205). Secondly, the pieces which appeared in the *Poems*, 1850, were roughly dated, ranging from "*ætat.* 14" to "*ætat.* 26"—the "*ætat.*" meaning "at the age of," not "in the year of his life": *e.g.* "Mont Blanc Revisited" is dated "*ætat.* 26"; it was written, as we know from other sources (p. 233 *n*), when he was 26 years old, not in his 26th year. In the absence of other evidence, the dates given in the edition of 1850 must be

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accepted; being taken as indicating the years, not of publication, but of composition, for which they were obviously intended. But this evidence is not conclusive, for we know, from the two sources next to be mentioned, that the dates given in the 1850 volume were sometimes erroneous. Thirdly, many of the pieces were dated either by the author himself at the time, or by his parents. This evidence applies only to the *juvenilia*. Fourthly, the present editors have had the advantage of access to a voluminous correspondence addressed by Ruskin and his father, during the years 1836–47, on the subject of the poems, to W. H. Harrison. This correspondence has thrown much fresh light on points of chronology, and has enabled the editors, on conclusive evidence, to make several alterations in the hitherto accepted arrangement of the poems. Notes on such points will be found in the following pages.

Owing to the fact that Ruskin's early contributions to periodical literature were not signed with his name, but only with his initials, pieces written by other persons are sometimes attributed to him. In an American edition of his poems a piece entitled "Spring," and beginning "Infant spirit of the Spring," is included. It appeared in *Friendship's Offering* for 1837, pp. 383–384, where it is signed "R." Ruskin, however, stated that he certainly did not write it.[1] In a publication entitled *The Bow in the Cloud; or the Negro's Memorial* (1834), there is a piece (pp. 239–240), "Repose for the Weary," which is signed "J. R." But this also was not written by Ruskin. No trace of it is to be found in the MSS. of Ruskin's *juvenilia*, which his parents preserved most carefully. Moreover, there is in existence a list drawn up by his father—who was very precise in these matters—of all the early works of his son which had appeared in print (see below, p. 102 *n*). "Repose for the Weary" does not figure in the list.[2]

The *illustrations* in this volume include (1) reproductions of all the facsimiles and (2) plates introduced in the illustrated edition of 1891, and (3) some additional plates and a facsimile expressly made for the present edition.

[1] *Poems*, 1891, ii. 345.

[2] Mr. F. W. Bourdillon in the *Athenæum* for June 21, 1902, argues that "on both external and internal evidence" the piece should be ascribed to Ruskin. The external evidence he adduces is, that among many other contributors to the volume was T. Pringle, who was editor of *Friendship's Offering*, and knew Ruskin. The internal evidence is that "the seriousness and evident attempt at dignity of style, with a certain air of immaturity both of thought and expression, are very characteristic of Ruskin's early poetry." Neither of these arguments seems to afford much evidence of identification, and in the absence of very strong evidence to the contrary, the considerations given above seem to the editors decisive.

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The first facsimile (facing p. 264) is of a letter from Ruskin to his father, dated December 31, 1828, and enclosing the "poem" on Highland Music, which is the second facsimile. For a note on these verses, see p. 264 *n*. Both the copperplate handwriting of the letter and the printing hand of the verses are remarkably neat and well-formed for a boy of nine. The third facsimile (facing p. 316) is two years later in date, and the "printing" is still neater. These lines on "The Fairies" are dated on one of two MS. copies, "January 5, 1831." These three facsimiles were given in the illustrated edition of 1891. In this edition a fourth is added. This is of a page in the illustrated "Tour on the Continent" (facing p. 356), showing the author's sketch of Ehrenbreitstein above the neatly "printed" verses. The date is 1833.

Many of the Plates introduced in the illustrated edition of 1891 were chosen, like those given in the first volume of this edition, not so much as illustrations of the text, but as showing Ruskin's hand at different periods. But several of the Plates have the additional interest of being reproductions of drawings made by the author at the time, and for the purpose of the several poems beside which they are here printed. Remarks on the Plates will be found in the Prefatory Notes here reprinted from the illustrated edition of 1891. In this edition four new Plates are given. One has been already mentioned among the facsimiles. A second is a photogravure of a drawing of Fribourg, done in 1835. This drawing (which is in the possession of Mr. George Allen) was published by the half-tone process in *The Bookman* for March 1900, and in *The Strand Magazine* for December 1902. A third new Plate is a drawing of Rouen, also of 1835 (see p. 430): this is printed from a line block. The drawing was published in the *Magazine of Art*, January 1888, and again (on a smaller scale), April 1900. The fourth new Plate is a photogravure made (by kind permission of Mrs. Cunliffe) from Ruskin's drawing of Amboise (between pp. 170 and 171); a comparison of this with the reproduction of the engraving made for *Friendship's Offering* will, it is thought, be of interest.

E. T. C.

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PREFATORY NOTES ON THE PLATES

[FROM THE EDITION OF 1891][1]

THE illustrations to Mr. Ruskin's earlier works were for the most part triumphs of line-engraving—of the old standard art, in which the designer and the engraver united their forces for a joint result, like players on different instruments of concerted music. It was never their intention to give the style and the touch of the draughtsman, his separate individuality, his momentary mood, as shown in the very material and handling of the original sketch. This is the boast of modern photographic engraving—that it tries to reproduce the master, to *facsimile* the authentic document.

And this is what we want here in such pictures as may rightly illustrate a collection of Poems written in Youth, in bygone historic times, recording a famous man's childhood and boyhood, his first impressions and fresh ideas of the world and of life. For such a purpose we want genuine records of the traditional precocity which we should like to verify: some true measure of the progress which we suspect, but cannot otherwise trace, by which genius was developed. We want to see Ruskin's drawings, and not engravers' plates this time; for we have sometimes doubted how much of the beauty of those wonderful engravings in *Modern Painters* and *The Stones of Venice* was really the work of the same hand as that which wrote the books.

The best and most complete of Mr. Ruskin's drawings were made for those great works, or, in one way and another, have passed out of his possession; but from his remaining sketches I have chosen a few for mechanical reproduction by a method which, clever and charming as it is, adds nothing to their cleverness or charm. Photogravures,[2] helped by Mr. George Allen's careful retouching, render the very marks of the pencil and strokes of the pen, so that you have here some of the actual drawings that the young poet made to illustrate the verses printed over against

[1] [Vol. i. pp. v.–xi. By the editor of that edition, Mr. W. G. Collingwood. For note on alterations in the Plates as given in this edition, see above, p. xvi.]

[2] [In the ed. of 1891 by Messrs. Walker & Boutall. In the present edition, when new Plates have been made, by Messrs. Allen & Co.]

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them—or very nearly the actual drawings. For, with all knowledge and all care no reproduction can be quite the same thing as an original, if the original owe any of its interest to the more subtle artistic qualities of line and tone. Still, it is only by comparing the plates with the sketches that the difference can be detected; and at any rate nothing is wilfully altered —nothing is added.

The subjects have been chosen so as to show Mr. Ruskin's hand at different periods, in different materials, and in different styles. They begin with his early outlines in pen and pencil; they include specimens of the various kinds of drawing he produced under various influences; and a few of the sketches made when his own style was formed; in colour, and in black and white; with the point and the brush, severally and combined. It was impossible to arrange them in strict chronological sequence. In three or four instances a later picture has been fitted to an earlier poem. But the "Tours" of 1833 and 1835 are illustrated with drawings made at the time and for the purpose, and in the case of the later verses most of the pictures are contemporary with the poems.

The "Watch-Tower at Andernach" (Plate 14, p. 354) reproduces in the actual size part of a larger drawing in pen on warm grey paper done in the manner which the young artist evolved for himself out of copying Cruikshank. It is given as an example of the careful, though untaught, work of a boy of fourteen. The "Jungfrau" (Plate 16, p. 380) is one of his attempts to imitate the Rogers vignettes; artificially composed—not without skill, though with less regard than he afterwards paid to truth of mountain-drawing. This Plate is the same size as the original, to which, however, it hardly does justice, the crisp fineness of the pen lines being untranslatable in photography.

The drawings of 1835 are in imitation of Prout; some done on the spot with soft pencil on grey paper, like the "Rouen" (Plate 20, p. 430), which I take to be one of the "sketches three" mentioned in the letter to Richard Fall,[1] and the "Nancy" (Plate 19, p. 404)—both perfect facsimiles, though a little reduced. They give a good notion of the ready certainty of placing lines, without previous feeling about for them, to which the Cruikshank style led; though they are still not quite above correction in the perspective. Others were done from sketches in pen upon grey paper, touched with white now partly faded, which has been cleverly rendered by the engraver. Of these we have the "Mont Velan,"[2] the "Fortress in Val d'Aosta"[3] (Plate 21, p. 432), "Hospital,"

[1] [The Rouen (Plate 18, p. 400), added in this edition, is another of them.]

[2] [In this edition, published in Vol. I. (Plate 20).]

[3] [In the ed. of 1891 this Plate was here said to be of Fort Bard. It is, however, of the Château de Saint-Pierre, five miles above Aosta, on the road to Courmayeur.]

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or Hospenthal, on the St. Gothard (Plate 23, p. 486), and the "Ancienne Maison, Lucerne" (Plate 22, p. 434), as he called it—and we may as well keep the original title when any is found on the back of the drawing.

By 1837 this outline style had become freer and larger. The "Ruin near Ambleside" (Plate 13, p. 290) is considerably reduced from a drawing in firm pencil outline, laid down with wonderful certainty, and no previous bungling and india-rubber work. To this kind of outline a wash of colour was added next year, in the "Haddon Hall" (Plate 12, p. 284), and the change marks a transition from the Proutesque style to that of David Roberts, which Ruskin mentions in *Præterita* as taking place about this time;[1] though in this year, 1838, he was still using the lead pencil now and then in the manner he had learnt from his drawing-master—the ordinary style of contemporary sketching. An example of this is the "Rydal-Water" (Plate 1, p. 4). On the tour of 1840–41 he developed his pencil and wash on grey paper into a method that combined great boldness and delicacy, represented by the "Chamouni" of 1841 or 1842 (frontispiece), reduced from one of the half-imperial drawings of which he made many about this time.

But, returning home, he worked up some of his sketches into vignettes in exaggerated imitation of Turner's more extravagant compositions, and had them elaborately engraved to illustrate his poems in *Friendship's Offering*. These, like his poetry of the same period, mark a transition epoch in Mr. Ruskin's biography, the interval otherwise occupied by ill-health and disappointment in love, between Christ Church and *Modern Painters*. The Plates, now lost, were beautifully engraved: one, "The Coast of Genoa" (Plate 6, p. 219), has been re-engraved by Mr. M. E. Saddler with great success, considering that the art, which fifty years ago was at its high-water mark, has now all but perished. The other two, "Amboise" (Plate 3, before p. 171) and "The Glacier des Bois" (Plate 7, p. 224), have been copied in process as far as process can copy them, merely to show the arrangement of the picture, as they are referred to in the notes, and seem to be required in their place. It may be remarked here that several of the poems published in the Annuals from 1835 to 1845 were written for ready-made Plates by other artists, which do not come into the scope of this publication.[2]

I cannot determine the exact limits of this period of morbid Turnerism. The "Amboise" was done while Mr. Ruskin was ill at Leamington in

[1] [*Præterita*, ii. ch. ii. § 20.]
[2] [See below, notes on pp. 181, 205.]

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1841;[1] "The Coast of Genoa" and "The Glacier des Bois" probably soon after: 1843 is the date of their publication after all the delays incidental to engraving and printing. But in 1842 he made his first sincere studies of nature, looking for his subjects with his own eyes, no longer with those of Prout or Turner. One of his tree-sketches at home is given (Plate 25, p. 470). The original is much more vigorous and effective, though it is easy to trace in the Plate a new freedom and command of the brush different from the wary adhesion to outline in earlier work. Which power attained, he proceeded to write the first volume of *Modern Painters*.

[1] [See *Præterita*, ii. ch. iv. § 63, where Ruskin describes the drawing as "highly laboured"—"representing the castle as about seven hundred feet above the river (it is perhaps eighty or ninety) . . . and some steps and balustrades (which are not there) going down to the river." It was, however, "beautifully engraved by Goodall." Mr. George Smith, the publisher, had first proposed to employ another engraver, when Ruskin sent him the following letter:—

> My dear Sir,—If it be not too late, I feel very much inclined to remonstrate with you on your choice of an engraver for the "Amboise" drawing, especially because I should not like (after your allowing the thing to go into your book, perhaps somewhat more out of unwillingness to hurt my feelings by rejecting it, than because you thought it fit for the purpose) that the result should be either unsatisfactory, or injurious to you; which, if you leave it in Mr. Jeavons's hands, I am much afraid it will be. I did not know the name when I saw you on Saturday, and therefore could say nothing against it. I have since looked over every illustrated work in my possession, and the result is a firm conviction that you could hardly have pitched on any one less likely to do either you or me justice. I can find only two *decent* pieces of engraving from his hand: the "Bombay" in your 1828 volume, and the "Vesuvius" in 1830. The "Bombay" is clear and delicate, and the "Vesuvius," as far as the distance goes, very satisfactory. But Mr. Jeavons seems to me totally destitute of feeling, and untaught as an artist in every other of his works; his chief fault being a want of harmony and tenderness in dark tones everywhere, and an utter ignorance of drawing in foregrounds,—witness the town and castle of Foix in your last year's volume: harsh cutting, and without atmosphere all over, and with foliage in the foreground which a child might be ashamed of; and the untransparent shade and general coldness and lifelessness of the "Melrose Abbey," the year before; and, worst of all, the violent harshness, and want of all feeling, in the "Spoletto" of 1830. But if I were to judge from *Friendship's Offering*, I would let the "Vesuvius" balance a great deal of evil. But the share which Jeavons had in Turner's *Rivers of France* is conclusive. The "Canal of the Loire and Cher," the "Lillebonne," and the "Hôtel de Ville and Pont d'Arcole," are a disgrace to that work; and though I do not say Mr. Jeavons *could* not do better if he chose, I think that while there are so many men of certain and tried excellence, you are acting imprudently in leaving a subject, depending altogether on the delicacy of its tones, in the hands of a man of so little feeling. It so happens that you could not, by any possibility, have pitched on any other name in the whole list of engravers to which I should have objected. Some I may think better than others, but not one should I have spoken against. There are Cousen, Brandard, Wallis, Allen, Miller, Goodall, Willmore, Armytage, Richardson, Smith—all first-rate. Your "Torcello," by Armytage, and "Early Morning," by Richardson, both beautiful. Of these men J. Cousen is the first in those particular qualities which the "Amboise" drawing wants; and next to him, I think, J. B. Allen. But you cannot choose *one* who will not do infinitely better than this Jeavons. If he

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Eighteen hundred and forty-five was the date of Mr. Ruskin's first tour alone, without his parents, and of his first real insight into Italian art. In August he went to Baveno to meet J. D. Harding, and there he made the two sketches given at pp. 192 and 292 (Plates 4 and 8, "Mill at Baveno" and "Sunset at Baveno"). The impetuous brush-work with full dark colour and chinese white, never retouched, is very characteristic of a great part of Mr. Ruskin's sketching, and capitally rendered in the process-plate of the "Sunset"; while the expressive pen outline, with body-colour and transparent tinting, of the "Mill," is equally characteristic of another method he has frequently employed. It need hardly be said that this Mill is placed opposite the poem of 1840 only from a casual resemblance in subject.[1]

The same use of the pen in a coloured drawing is shown in a study of the cleavage of the Carrara marble-mountains (Plate 5, p. 208) of uncertain date; and this method has been used by Mr. Ruskin ever since, when he

> be poor, or have a family, he must not be injured by my means. But, depend upon it, the choice lies between injuring *him* or *you*. Perhaps you have gone too far with him to go back. Of course, if so, burn this letter, and think no more of it. But if you *can* transfer the drawing to any other man, I don't care whom, you will both benefit yourself and oblige me. I remain, my dear sir, very truly yours,
>
> J. RUSKIN.
>
> *P.S.*—What I have written above is much hurried, and somewhat injudicious from the violence of its expressions. Take care not to hurt Mr. Jeavons's feelings by any expression of such opinions.

(This letter was first printed in 1892, in a privately printed volume of *Letters upon Subjects of General Interest from John Ruskin to various Correspondents*, pp. 3–7). Ultimately Ruskin's father made himself responsible for the execution of the Plate, and entrusted the work to E. Goodall. "Ruskin came to my father's studio," writes F. Goodall, "when I was very young, accompanied by his father and mother. He had a flat parcel with him, which he untied and showed to my father—a water-colour drawing of Amboise. At first sight my father thought it was a Turner; but on a second look he said, 'It is an imitation or a copy. Who did it?' 'I did it,' replied Mr. Ruskin, 'and I have come expressly to ask you if you will kindly undertake to make an engraving of it.' 'I admire your work from Turner so much,' my father said, 'that I will do so with pleasure, provided you consent to let me put it in proper perspective'" (*Reminiscences of Frederick Goodall, R.A.*, 1902, p. 131). Mr. Goodall adds: "I believe Mr. Ruskin never forgot or forgave that speech of my father's, but the engraving was made. From that time, however, Mr. Ruskin seemed determined to do all he could to put down line engraving." This is a palpable absurdity. Ruskin may almost be said to have established a school of line engravers, and, so far from "putting it down," he was always writing it up. Soon after the time mentioned by Mr. Goodall, Ruskin was to embark upon the costly enterprise which enriched the later volumes of *Modern Painters* with some of the most beautiful line engravings ever produced; for his advocacy of line engraving in later years, see Appendix to *Ariadne Florentina*. For a later and favourable reference to Goodall, see *Modern Painters*, vol. i. pt. ii. sec. ii. ch. ii. § 20 *n*. The original drawing of Amboise is in the extensive collection of Ruskin drawings formed by the late Mr. Robert Cunliffe, Croft, Ambleside. By the kind permission of Mrs. Cunliffe, it is here reproduced in photogravure.]

[1] [The mill of the poem, was, however, in London: see note on p. 191.]

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had definite form to express, and the pen at hand. That he could, notwithstanding, draw with the brush over a rough pencil beginning is shown in the "Mont Blanc de St. Gervais," a delicate coloured study of 1849 (Plate 9, p. 234), and in the "Glacier des Bossons," a late drawing, of which the Plate (No. 11, p. 240), considerably reduced, loses not only all the tone and rich colour, but a great part of the form. His pencil, in these drawings, is not rubbed away before colouring, but calculated to help the final effect; as in "The Valley of Cluse" (Plate 10, p. 236), where the geological structure of the mountain is suggested by streaks of soft pencil-work, showing through the transparent, clear-edged wash. In this Plate the mechanical reproduction has been delicately helped out by Mr. George Allen's mezzotint. One regrets the loss of the colour—a scheme of rich purply grey contrasted with warm autumnal yellow in the trees, which here show only as masses of light.

To return to Mr. Ruskin's black-and-white, it is interesting to note the way in which his early Proutism gradually passed, through the imitation of Roberts, into that elaborate and delicate work represented by the "Abbeville" (Plate 17, p. 398). The reduction of this Plate from a half-imperial drawing has gained a certain look of microscopic exactitude at the expense of some of the refinements of gradation and definition; but it is a beautiful example of his matured draughtsmanship.

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[*Bibliographical Note.*—The verses in this volume were, for the most part, printed in the following work :—

> The | Poems | of | John Ruskin : | now first collected from original manuscript and printed | sources ; and Edited, in chronological order, with | Notes, Biographical and Critical, | by | W. G. Collingwood. | With facsimiles of MSS. and Illustrations by the Author.
>
> Volume I. | Poems written in Boyhood ; | 1826–1835. |
>
> Volume II. | Poems written in Youth ; | 1836–1845 ; | and later Poems | George Allen | Sunnyside, | Orpington, | and | Bell Yard, Temple Bar, London | 1891.

Vol. i. pp. xxviii. + 289. Vol. ii. pp. ix. + 360. Issued in three forms :— (1) a special edition of 300 copies, large post quarto, on hand-made paper, with 15 Plates (vol. i.) and 12 (vol. ii.), bound in half-vellum, at the price of 3 guineas ; (2) an ordinary edition of 2000 copies, also in quarto, with all the Plates, in green cloth, 30s. ; (3) a small edition, small crown 8vo, of 3000 copies, with the facsimiles of MS., but without the Plates, 10s.

The editor of the *Poems*, 1891, stated (vol. i. p. xi.), in a note dated "Coniston, August 1891," that "this publication is in no sense my own enterprise, that it had been long contemplated by Mr. Ruskin, and that it was put into my hands in default of better, with instructions which I have endeavoured to carry out faithfully. But as the selection and arrangement have been left entirely to me, it is only just to the author that I should avow the responsibility."

All the verses by Ruskin contained in the book above described are included in the present volume. The editorial matter is also textually included or substantially embodied. Vol. i. pp. v.–x. contained "Prefatory Notes on the Plates" ; for these, see above, pp. xxxix.–xliv. Vol. i. pp. xix.–xxviii., "Editor's Introduction. First Poems : 1826, age 7" ; for this, see below, pp. 253–259. Vol. i. pp. 261–267, "Preliminary Note on the Original MSS." : for these, see pp. 529–534. In each volume there were "Biographical Data" (vol. i. pp. 257–260, vol. ii. pp. 339–345) and "Notes to the Poems" (vol. i. pp. 268–289, vol. ii. pp. 346–360) ; the substance of these Data and Notes is given in footnotes to the present volume.

To each poem, as printed in this volume, is appended a note, giving particulars of its previous appearance in print. For bibliographical note on the *Poems*, collected in 1850 (being a portion of those collected in 1891), see p. 2. The poems which have been separately published are "Salsette and Elephanta" and "The Scythian Guest" ; for bibliographical notes, see pp. 90, 102.]

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I

POEMS

J. R.

COLLECTED

1850

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[*Bibliographical Note.*—The poems in the following pages (Part I.) were first collected in 1850, as described above (p. xxix.), in a volume entitled

Poems | J. R. | Collected | 1850.

Post octavo, pp. iv. + 283. A list of contents on pp. iii.–iv. Issued in cloth boards (some green, others purple), lettered across the back, "Poems. J. R.," and with a gilt lyre stamped upon the side. Printed for private circulation only, and very rare; there is no copy in the Library of the British Museum; a copy in original state was sold at Sotheby's in 1902 for £48. Fifty copies were printed, and of these several were subsequently destroyed by Ruskin. At the head of each poem is given the author's age at the time of composition (see above, p. xxxvi.). The text of this edition is that of 1850, except that a few obvious errors in punctuation have been corrected and that the lines are generally indented (see above, p. xxxvi.). Particulars of the earlier or later publication of the several pieces included in the volume of 1850 are given in footnotes to the following pages, where also textual variations are noted. The 1850 volume did not "collect" the following previously published verses: "On Skiddaw and Derwent Water" (see p. 265), "Salzburg" (p. 441), and "Fragments from a Metrical Journal: Andernacht and St. Goar" (p. 353).

An unauthorised American edition, first issued in 1882, has the following title-page:—

Poems | By | John Ruskin. | Collected and edited | By | James Osborne Wright. | New York: | John Wiley & Sons. | 1882.

Preface, pp. iii.–iv., pp. 1–234. This edition included "Salzburg" and the "Fragments," but only a selection of the other poems. It also included a poem, and an illustration, neither of which was by Ruskin (see pp. xxxvii., 191).]

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[1833][1]

SONG[2]

I WEARY for the torrent leaping
From off the scar's rough crest;
My muse is on the mountain sleeping,
My harp is sunk to rest.

I weary for the fountain foaming,
For shady holm and hill;
My mind is on the mountain roaming,
My spirit's voice is still.

I weary for the woodland brook
That wanders through the vale;
I weary for the heights that look
Adown upon the dale.

The crags are lone on Coniston,
And Loweswater's dell;[3]
And dreary on the mighty one,
The cloud-enwreathed Scawfell.

[1] [For note on other poems of 1833, see below, p. 338.]

[2] [This song was No. 1 in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 3–4, the earliest in date of the pieces there collected. It was reprinted in full in *John Ruskin: a Bibliographical Biography*, by W. E. A. Axon, 1879, pp. 4–5; in *Papers of the Manchester Literary Club*, vol. v., 1879, pp. 156–157; and in the *Poems*, 1891, vol. i. pp. 115–116. It is dated in the *Poems*, 1850, *ætat.* fourteen; "but from the position of the rough draft in Note-book viii., it seems to have been written some time before the author actually reached the age of fourteen, *i.e.* in his fourteenth year. . . . This song was suggested by the fact that the author had not been among mountains that year [1832], but only to Dover and Hastings. It is curious that his mountain-yearning does not carry him back to Snowdon [1831], but to earlier visions of the Lake Country, his first and last mountain-love."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. The "rough draft" is the only MS.]

[3] [For "Loweswater's dell" (in the *Poems*, 1850) the MS. reads "Glaramara's dell"; "a reading which I wish I could restore, for the sake both of the sound and of the sense."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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SONG

Oh! what although the crags be stern
Their mighty peaks that sever,
Fresh flies the breeze on mountain fern,
And free on mountain heather.

I long to tread the mountain head
Above the valley swelling;
I long to feel the breezes sped
From grey and gaunt Helvellyn.

I love the eddying, circling sweep,
The mantling and the foam
Of murmuring waters dark and deep,
Amid the valleys lone.

It is a terror, yet 'tis sweet,
Upon some broken brow
To look upon the distant sweep
Of ocean spread below.

There is a thrill of strange delight
That passes quivering o'er me,
When blue hills rise upon the sight
Like summer clouds before me.

[Age 14.]

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RYDAL-WATER.

August. 1838.

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UNIV OF
CALIFORNIA

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[1834][1]

THE MONTHS[2]

I

From your high dwellings, in the realms of snow
And cloud, where many an avalanche's fall
Is heard resounding from the mountain's brow,
Come, ye cold winds! at January's call,
On whistling wings; and, with white flakes, bestrew
The earth, till February's rain restore
The race of torrents to their wonted flow,
Whose waves shall stand in silent ice no more;
But, lashed by March's maddened winds, shall roar
With voice of ire, and beat the rocks on every shore.

II

Bow down your heads, ye flowers! in gentle guise,
Before the dewy rain that April sheds,
Whose sun shines through her clouds with quick surprise,
Shedding soft influences on your heads;
And wreathe ye round the rosy month that flies
To scatter perfumes on the path of June:
Till July's sun upon the mountains rise
Triumphant, and the wan and weary moon
Mingle her cold beams with the burning lume
That Sirius shoots through all the dreary midnight gloom.

[1] [For note on other poems of 1834, see below, p. 388.]

[2] [These three stanzas were published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1836, pp. 290–291, signed "J. R." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 23–24; in the American edition, pp. 7–8; *Poems*, 1891, i. 176–177. There are two MSS. of the piece, a rough copy in MS. Book No. viii.; a fair copy in No. xi. They are three out of the seventeen stanzas of a New Year's (1835) Address to his father. They must have been written before that year, and are accordingly placed here as belonging to 1834; in the ed. of 1850 they were wrongly placed at the end of the verses of 1835.]

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III

Rejoice, ye fields! rejoice and wave with gold,
When August round her precious gifts is flinging;
Lo! the crushed wain is slowly homeward rolled;
The sun-burnt reapers[1] jocund lays are singing:
September's steps her juicy stores unfold,
If the spring blossoms have not blushed in vain:
October's foliage yellows with his cold:
In rattling showers dark November's rain,
From every stormy cloud, descends amain,
Till keen December's snows close up the year again.

[Age 15.]

[1] [Misprinted "reaper's" in *Friendship's Offering.*]

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[1835][1]

THE AVALANCHE[2]

The accident to which these lines allude occurred in the year 1822. Several guides, with Dr. Hamel, a Russian, and an Englishman, were ascending the Mont Blanc; when they had crossed the plain of ice above the Glacier of Bossons, an avalanche descended from the Calotte of Mont Blanc, which swept away several of the guides, two of whom were irrecoverably lost.[3]

I

THEY went away at break of day,
And brave hearts were about them,
Who led them on, but at the grey
Of eve returned without them.

II

They're watched from yonder lowly spot
By many an anxious eye;
Hearts that forbode they know not what,
And fear they know not why.

III

"Why left ye, lone upon the steep,
My child?" the widow said:—
"We cannot speak to those who sleep;
We dwell not with the dead."

[1] [For note on other poems of 1835, see below, p. 395.]
[2] [*Poems*, 1850, pp. 5–7; *Poems*, 1891, i. 240–242. MS. in Book viii.]
[3] [The MS. adds, "The survivors wandered about for two or three hours, and called, but there was no answer, and they were compelled to descend." The actual date of the accident was August 1820; Dr. Hamel was accompanied by two Englishmen, and by one Swiss gentleman. The party had twelve guides. An account of the catastrophe may be read in *The Annals of Mont Blanc*, by C. E. Mathews, 1898, pp. 224–229. Remains of the dead men were found in 1861, 1863, and 1865.]

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IV

"Why comes not with you from the hill
My husband?" said the bride:—
Alas! his limbs are cold and still
Upon the mountain side.

V

His boy, in undefinèd fright,
Stood shivering at her knee;
"The wind is cold, the moon is white,
Where can my father be?"

VI

That night, through mourning Chamouni,
Shone many a midnight beam;
And grieving voices wander by
The murmur of the stream.

VII

They come not yet, they come not yet!
The snows are deep above them,
Deep, very deep; they cannot meet
The kiss of those who love them.

VIII

Ye avalanches, roar not loud
Upon the dreary hill:
Ye snows, spread light their mountain shroud;
Ye tempests, peace, be still!

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IX

For there are those who cannot weep,
Who cannot smile, who will not sleep,
Lest, through the midnight's lonely gloom,*
The dead should rift their mountain-tomb,
With haggard look and fearful air,
To come and ask a sepulchre.[1]

[Age 16.]

* This is a superstition very prevalent among the Swiss.

[1] [In the volume of 1850, "The Avalanche" was followed by lines headed "Ehrenbreitstein: Fragment from a Metrical Journal." These were extracted from the *Journal of a Tour on the Continent*, written in 1835, where they now appear; see below, p. 355.]

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THE EMIGRATION OF THE SPRITES[1]

I

THERE was a time, in Anglo land,
When goblin grim, and fairy fair,
On earth, in water, and in air,
Held undisturbed command.
Ye hills and groves! lament, in grief—
Lament, and say, woe worth the day,
When innovating disbelief
First drove the friendly sprites away;
Then was there not a forest leaf
Without attendant elfin grey,
That sat to make the leaflet shake,
Whene'er the breezes chose to wake.

II

There was not, then, a forest lawn
Where fairy ringlet was not made,
Before, through the surrounding shade,
The slanting sun bespoke the dawn.
There was no knoll beneath an oak
Where were not found, bestrewed around,
By woodman's child (from slumber woke
By singing birds' delightful sound)
Pink tops, from mushroom tables broke,
And acorn cups upon the ground,
From which so fine, when fairies dine,
They always drink their dewy wine.

[1] [*Poems*, 1850, pp. 13–19; *Poems*, 1891, i. 243–249. MS. in Book viii. In stanza ii. l. 6, "were" was misprinted "was," and in line 1 of stanza iii. "or" was misprinted "on," in the text of the 1891 ed., though both errors were marked in a prefatory note.]

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III

There was no fell or misty mountain,
Beneath whose darkling cliffs, at night,
There brooded not some shadowy sprite:
There was no swiftly flowing fountain
Without a spirit to preside;
And, on the moor and by the fen,
The kelpie by the water-side,
(The bane of all wayfaring men)
Shook his bright torch, a faithless guide;
The brownie wandered in the glen,
Or stalked upon the hill-top high,
Gigantic on the evening sky.

IV

The shepherd, in an ecstacy,
Unearthly voices seemed to hear;
Prophetic forms perceived, with fear,
To pass before his dreaming eye:
Perhaps beheld, at close of day,
With melancholy air beside him,
Those who, he knew, were far away:
Or long procession slowly gliding,
Or voice of battle's bursting bray,
Or troops upon the mountain riding,
And started back, and feared to see
A visible futurity.

V

It was upon a starry night,
When winds were calm, and all around still,
The world of spirits called a council;
And every incorporeal wight
Came there his brother ghosts to greet:—
Some shoot, like falling stars, through heaven;

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Some, like the northern meteors, meet;
Some ride the clouds by tempests driven;
Some yoke the lightning's blazing sheet
By which the mountain-tops are riven;
Some came veiled in vapours well,
Some voiceless and invisible.

VI

A fairy, from the crowd advancing,
First in the conclave silence broke;
"Because these mortals" (thus he spoke)
"Are far too blind to see us dancing,
They think, forsooth! we never do.
Because we're of ætherial kind,
Formed out of mist and fed with dew,
Invisible as summer wind,
The blundering, earth-polluted crew
All faith in us have quite resigned.
Fairies (if we could cross the sea)
Are more revered in Germany."

VII

He spoke: the fairies sitting round
Cried "hear!" along the voice did pass,
And shook the dew upon the grass;
And the gnat hummed in with the sound.
A brownie next arose and spoke
(A Bodsbeck resident of yore),[1]
Uncouth his form, and stern his look,
And thus inveighed he: "Now no more
For me, behind the chimney-nook,
The bowl of milk stands creaming o'er;
No more upon the board I see
Some dainty morsel left for me.

[1] ["Stanzas vii. and viii. refer to *The Brownie of Bodsbeck*, a story by the author's friend, James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. For Hogg and Ruskin, see Vol. I. p. xxviii.]

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VIII

"A certain shepherd, wont by night
To watch his flocks on Ettrick braes,
And who has sung a hundred lays,
Inspired by every mountain sprite,—
Who well my old achievements knew,
Began to tell some pranks that I did;
But, when his tale was half-way through,
Paused in the story undecided,
Fearing that few would think it true,
And that the public would deride it.
He stopped, for fear of jest or banter,
And changed me to a covenanter."

IX

With waving plume of rushing flame,
A kelpie, leaping from his seat,
Thus to the council spoke: "Is't meet
That now no more the kelpie's name
Is named on any moorland stream?
These mortals say, and think they're wise,
That my existence is a dream;
And call my fickle fire that flies
O'er every fen, with brilliant beam,
Gases that from the waters rise;
And now, because such stuff gets credit,
I'm never followed, seldom dreaded."

X

A travelled goblin next arose;
In foreign countries had been he,
Who thus addressed the company:
"Where Rhine beneath his castles flows,
Full many a fairy train I met;
Dancing beneath some ruined tower

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[1836][1]

ON ADÈLE, BY MOONLIGHT[2]

With what a glory and a grace
The moonbeam lights her laughing face,
And dances in her dazzling eye;
As liquid in its brilliancy
As the deep blue of midnight ocean,
When underneath, with trembling motion,
The phosphor[3] light floats by!

And blushes bright pass o'er her cheek,
But pure and pale as is the glow
Of sunset on a mountain peak,
Robed in eternal snow;
Her ruby lips half-oped the while,
With careless air around her throwing,
Or, with a vivid glance, bestowing
A burning word, or silver smile.

[Age 16.]

[1] [For note on other poems of 1836, see below, p. 449.]

[2] [*Poems*, 1850, p. 22; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 6. No MS. of this piece has been found. It is not in Book viii., which contains the other poems of the time. In the *Poems*, 1850, this piece is headed "*ætat.* 16," *i.e.* as written before his seventeenth birthday, Feb. 8, 1836; it was probably written during the visit of the Domecqs in Jan.–Feb. 1836. The order of this and the following piece is here changed from that of 1850, and they are given in the sequence of the sentimental motives. "Good-night" describes the poet's feelings when Adèle had gone.]

[3] [A favourite light in Ruskin's early pieces; *cf.* below, note on p. 94.]

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GOOD NIGHT[1]

She lays her down in beauty's light,—
Oh, peaceful may her slumbers be!
She cannot hear my breathed "Good Night,"
I cannot send it o'er the sea;
And though my thoughts be fleet and free
To fly to her with speed excelling,
They cannot speak—she cannot see—
Those constant thoughts around her dwelling.

Thou planet pale, thou plaintive star!
Adown whose light the dew comes weeping;
Thou shinest faint, but wondrous far;
Oh! surely thou behold'st her sleeping.
And though her eye thou canst not see
Beneath its archèd fringes shrouded,
Thou pallid star! 'tis well for thee
That such a lustre is beclouded.

Oh! haste thee then, thy rays are fleet,
And be thou, through her casement gleaming,
A starlight in her slumber sweet,
An influence of delightful dreaming.
Oh! is there no kind breeze to swell
Along thy silent looks of light,
And at her slumb'rous ear to tell
Who sent thee there to say "Good Night"?

[Age 16.]

[1] [*Poems*, 1850, pp. 20–21; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 8–9. In the ed. of 1891 this poem was printed after "The Last Smile" (see next page). "It evidently refers to a later time, though it occurs before 'The Last Smile' in MS. Book viii. and 'Poems, J. R.,' where it was first printed, pp. 20–21, and marked *ætat.* 16; *i.e.* before Feb. 8. It was not by any means the author's invariable practice to write poems at the actual time when they were suggested; and 'The Last Smile' may have been written many days after the 'yesternight' whose events it narrates."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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THE LAST SMILE[1]

SHE sat beside me yesternight,
With lip and eye so sweetly smiling,
So full of soul, of life, of light,
So beautifully care-beguiling,
That she had almost made me gay,
Had almost charmed the thought away
(Which, like the poisoned desert wind,
Came sick and heavy o'er my mind),
That memory soon mine all would be,
And she would smile no more for me.

[Age 17.]

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1837, p. 102, signed "J. R." The text given above is that of the *Poems*, 1850, p. 25, which agrees with the MS. (in Book viii.). The changes introduced in *F.O.*, doubtless by Mr. Harrison, were: in line 2, "blandly" instead of "sweetly smiling"; line 4, "So sweetly my lorn heart beguiling." Afterwards printed in the American *Poems of John Ruskin*, 1882, p. 9, from the *F.O.* text, and in *The Painter Poets*, ed. Kineton Parkes, 1890, p. 185 (*F.O.* text, but "yesternight" in line 1 misprinted "yesterday"). "The lines were written or supposed to be written on the day after Mdlle. Domecq's departure. . . . Marked (in the *Poems*) '*ætat.* 17' *i.e.* after Feb. 8, 1836."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. In the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 7.]

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[1837][1]

THE MIRROR[2]

I

It saw, it knew thy loveliness,
  Thy burning lip, and glancing eye,
Each lightning look, each silken tress
  Thy marble forehead braided by,
Like an embodied music, twined
About a brightly breathing mind.

II

Alas! its face is dark and dim;
  No more, its lightless depth below
That glancing eye shall seem to swim,
  That brow to breathe or glow;
Its treacherous depth—its heartless hue—
Forgets the form that once it knew.

[1] [In January 1837 Ruskin went into residence at Christ Church, Oxford; and the influence of his studies and his surroundings there begins at once to be seen in his poetry. He describes in *Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 214, how his feelings were "solemnized as we entered among the towers in the twilight," and in the following chapter the impressions made upon him by "Christ Church Choir." Some of these impressions are versified in the piece here given on "Christ Church" (p. 25). He was set to read Herodotus, and the first of his Herodotean pieces ("The Scythian Grave") belongs to this year. He must have decided, immediately on matriculation (Oct. 1836), to compete for the Newdigate; his poem, "The Gipsies," was sent in before March 31. The other verses of the year—"The Mirror" and "Remembrance"—are inspired by memories of Adèle. The summer tour of 1837 was to the Lake Country, which, however, did not on this occasion, as on the last (see below, p. 286), inspire Ruskin's muse: it suggested to him, instead, *The Poetry of Architecture* (see Vol. I. p. xlii.).]

[2] [First printed in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i., No. 8, March 1839, p. 653, signed "J. R." This *Miscellany* was, like *Friendship's Offering*, published by Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co., and Mr. W. H. Harrison was connected with it. In the *Poems*, 1850 (pp. 102–103) (followed by the ed. of 1891, ii. 107–108), it was given among the verses of 1838, but it was certainly written before April 1837; see letter on next page. No MS. is extant.]

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III

With many a changing shape and face
  Its surface may be marked and crossed—
Pourtrayed with as distinct a grace
  As thine, whose loveliness is lost;
But there's one mirror, good and true,
That doth not lose what once it knew.

IV

My thoughts are with that beauty blest,
  A breathing, burning, living vision,
That, like a dove with wings at rest,
  Still haunts the heart it makes Elysian;
And days and times pass like a sleep
Softly sad, and still, and deep;
And, oh! what grief would wakening be
From slumber bright with dreams of thee!

[Age 18.]

[The following letter from Ruskin to W. H. Harrison refers to criticisms which the latter had made upon "The Mirror." Ruskin, it will be seen, had much to say for himself, and in this case his editor was less adamantine than with *Leoni* (see Vol. I. p. 302). Most of the lines remained as the author first wrote them:—

OXFORD. *Saturday, April 8th*, 1837.

MY DEAR SIR,—I take the first opportunity after my arrival at Oxford to return you my best thanks for the kindness with which you have perused my little poem, and for the trouble you have taken in pointing out its principal defects. I am quite ashamed of myself for having sent a thing so unfinished as you have convinced me this is, and can only plead the apology of having no other fragment by me. I have taken time, as you permitted me, to think over the points in question, and the more I thought the more I felt the truth of your remarks.

1. The error with regard to the pronoun is egregious; it must be the second person all the way through, except, of course, in the fourth line of the third stanza, where "here" must remain.

2. Burning lip. You put my "burnings" in such formidable juxtaposition that I begin to think there is some probability of my setting the Thames on fire, although I am afraid the more general opinion would be that there was "burning instead of beauty." I am afraid, however, that in this first instance we must blaze away. Rosy and ruby are somewhat the worse for the wear; they are besides weak, and only simply colour, without expression. The idea that I wish to convey by "burning" is that of a lip which when it opens is like the opening of a crimson cloud when the west is most glorious, with the smiles and the expression flashing about it, and from it, like the sheet lightning when it gleams fastest and brightest, kindling its accents into a quivering

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music. Neither rosy nor ruby will do for this; lightning I have just below; glowing is weak and applied to the brow farther on; smiling is paltry and useless; quivering expresses only an accidental attribute; kindling is the only word which could be substituted, and that is a spindle-shanked sort of a word, which I do not think you will consider preferable to the original epithet, that is, if we can get rid of our inferior conflagration in the last stanza.

Embodied music, etc. I am sorry you do not like these lines; they are, I confess, obscure. The idea meant is, that the hair floated about the beauty of the countenance, as a half-forgotten melody, soft, melancholy, and wild, seems to twine itself and float about the brightest and most beautiful feelings of the heart, making them brighter by its own sadness, and fainting in its own sweetness. I added the word "embodied" to express that the hair is as soft and flowing as one might suppose a visible sound to be, were such a thing possible, which, in imagination, it is. I do not know how to alter the lines, and do not like to lose the idea. I believe the—"About a brightly breathing mind" to be, in plain English, nonsense, but, you know, it may be very fine for all that. However, we have a sad expenditure of breath below, and in order that I may not be quite out of breath, I must haul my wind a little. Suppose we put—About a bright and holy mind; or, a brightly dreaming mind; or a dream-illumined ditto; or, perhaps best of all—particularly for cadence—about a bright immortal ditto.

Form. We must get rid of the duplicate; but it cannot be in the first verse of the third stanza, for this reason: All measures have not only an allotted number of feet, but a marked *ictus metricus*, a fixed syllable, on which the voice falls with greater force and pauses longer than on any other in the line. In this measure, as well as in that consisting of four triple feet, this syllable is the last of the third foot (the place occupied in this line by "form"). It is of great importance, therefore, that this syllable should be one on which the voice *can* rest with ease, and would do so did the syllable occur in prose. In order to this, if the vowel be a short one, it must be followed at least by two consonants, and one of those, if possible, a liquid; but if it be a long vowel, or a weak diphthong, it is sufficient if it be followed by one liquid, or two mutes, but not by one mute. The weakness occasioned by the non-observance of this rule is very sensible in the first line of the last verse, where, in the word beauty, whose first syllable occupies the important place, the weak diphthong *eau*, having no more force than the long vowel *u*, is followed only by one mute; in consequence, the voice cannot lay the ictus on the syllable, and the whole melody of the line is lost. In the first line of the third, the short *o* of form is supported by two consonants, and those both liquids, which makes the syllable perfectly forcible; but we cannot substitute for this "shape," even though we get a long vowel, for it is followed only by one mute, and besides spoiling the swing of the line, we should lose the alliteration of the *f*'s. The same objections will not apply to its substitution in the line above, but I think it would be more poetical to say, forgets the *light* that once it knew; for "lightless," just before (where I would put vacant, but for the same reason—cannot), put "darkened," and for "dark," in the first line, "dull," or if you like "dark" there, we can put "misty" for "lightless," thus alliterating in *m* instead of in *d*, and I think getting rid of the difficulty without any deterioration of the stanza.

And now for some visionary lines—suppose, in the second of the last verse we were to knock down the fire and breath with an "everlasting" by way of a "temporary" relief, or, let me see, what epithets can we apply to visions in general: there are sweet visions, like a baby's anticipations of sugared bread and butter, or a school-boy's estimation of the probable magnitude of future plum-cakes; there are misty visions, like those of the same young gentleman, after receiving a disagreeable piece of persuasion, in his dexter or sinister optic. There are perpetual visions, like a curate's of a mitre; angelically rare visions, like a young, and golden visions like an old, lawyer's of a litigious

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client; mysterious visions, like a pig's of the wind; awful visions, like the first glance of a poet's manuscript—but none of these epithets will apply to this sort of vision. Might we not fill up the line with—"A living, ever-present vision"; or, perhaps better, "a constant thought indwelling"; or "a bright but sadly smiling" It; or, which is best of all—"a thing of life——a dark-eyed"—if I were not rather hurried I could give you choice, for a blank like this may be filled up hundreds of ways.

Lastly, "days and times"—"hours and days" is quite as good; in fact, I should have written it at first, unless it diminishes the idea a little.

And now I must again beg your pardon for being so pertinacious in the defence of some points. I assure you no one could value more highly than I do the advantage of your criticism, and I only wish I could have it more frequently. I hope that with these alterations you will find the poem more fit for its place, and suited to its purpose. Present my compliments to Mrs. Harrison, and believe me, my dear sir,

(Could you be so kind as to let me see a proof of the lines before the book is published? I am quite ashamed of giving you so much trouble about my few paltry lines.)—Yours very truly,

J. Ruskin.]

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REMEMBRANCE[1]

I OUGHT to be joyful; the jest and the song
And the light tones of music resound through the throng;
But its cadence falls dully and dead on my ear,
And the laughter I mimic is quenched in a tear.

For here are no longer, to bid me rejoice,
The light of thy smile, or the tone of thy voice,
And, gay though the crowd that's around me may be,
I am alone, Adèle, parted from thee.

Alone, said I, dearest? Oh, never we part,—
For ever, for ever, thou'rt here in my heart;
Sleeping or waking, where'er I may be,
I have but one thought, and that thought is of thee.

When the planets roll red through the darkness of night,
When the morning bedews all the landscape with light,
When the high sun of noon-day is warm on the hill,
And the breezes are quiet, the green leafage still;

I love to look out o'er the earth and the sky,
For Nature is kind, and seems lonely, as I;
Whatever in Nature most lovely I see,
Has a voice that recalls the remembrance of thee.

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1838, pp. 119–120, signed "ρ." "May I beg particularly," wrote the author's father to the editor, "that the lines 'Remembrance' may not be dated Oxford. The gravity of the university would be shocked." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 49–50; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 64–65; American edition, pp. 17–18. The MS. is among the papers of W. H. Harrison. The only difference between the texts of *F.O.* and the *Poems* (besides a few minor points of punctuation) is that in the former, stanza 2, line 4, reads, "I am alone, when I'm parted from thee"; the lady's name was naturally omitted at the time. This piece was written before March 1837, and it is therefore here put earlier than in the *Poems*, 1850, where it and "Christ Church, Oxford" followed "The Scythian Grave."]

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Remember, remember:—those only can know
How dear is remembrance, whose hope is laid low;
'Tis like clouds in the west, that are gorgeous still,
When the dank dews of evening fall deadly and chill;

Like the bow in the cloud that is painted so bright,—
Like the voice of the nightingale, heard through the night,
Oh! sweet is remembrance, most sad though it be,
For remembrance is all that remaineth for me.

[Age 18.]

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CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD[1]

NIGHT

FAINT from the bell the ghastly echoes fall,
  That grates within the grey cathedral tower—
Let me not enter through the portal tall,
  Lest the strange spirit of the moonless hour
Should give a life to those pale people, who
Lie in their fretted niches, two and two—
Each with his head on pillowy stone reposed,
And his hands lifted, and his eyelids closed.

A cold and starless vapour, through the night,
  Moves as the paleness of corruption passes
Over a corpse's features, like a light
  That half illumines what it most effaces;
The calm round water gazes on the sky,[2]
Like the reflection of the lifeless eye
Of one who sleeps and dreams of being slain,
Struggling in frozen frenzy, and in vain.

From many a mouldering oriel, as to flout
  Its pale, grave brow of ivy-tressèd stone,

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1838, pp. 287–288, signed "J. R., Oxon.," but without the second stanza. Quoted and reviewed in the *Athenæum*, No. 520 (Oct. 14, 1837). The *Torch* also, No. 9 (Oct. 21, 1837), in reviewing *Friendship's Offering* for 1838, called attention to "a new contributor who signs himself J. R., and is assuredly an acquisition to the number, for he *can* write *poetry*." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 51–52, where the second stanza was added in smaller print at the end, with the heading "Second verse in MS." Reprinted in the American edition (pp. 19–20), and in *Painter Poets*, p. 186, as in *F.O.*; in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 66–67, with the additional stanza. There is no MS.]

[2] [The fountain in the middle of "Tom" quadrangle. In connexion with the "revel about" referred to in the next stanza, a passage from Ruskin's diary of 1840 may be cited :—

"*Rome* (*Dec.* 2).—There was a howling beneath my window last night more beastly and idiotical than anything I ever heard from the human race, and that is saying something after sleeping for two years in Peckwater."]

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Comes the incongruous laugh, and revel shout—
  Above, some solitary casement, thrown
Wide open to the wavering night wind,
Admits its chill—so deathful, yet so kind
Unto the fevered brow and fiery eye
Of one, whose night-hour passeth sleeplessly.

Ye melancholy chambers! I could shun
  The darkness of your silence, with such fear,
As places where slow murder had been done.
  How many noble spirits have died here—
Withering away in yearnings to aspire,
Gnawed by mocked hope—devoured by their own fire!
Methinks the grave must feel a colder bed
To spirits such as these, than unto common dead.

Oxon.

[Age 18.]

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THE GIPSIES[1]

Vitamque sub divo, et trepidis agant[2]
In rebus.—Hor. *Carm.*, Lib. iii., Od. 2, line 6.

'Twas in the hollow of a forest dim,
Where the low breezes sang their evening hymn,
As in a temple by thick branches aisled,
Whose leaves had many voices, weak or wild;
Their summer voice was like the trooping tread
Of fiery steeds, to meteor battle bred;
Their autumn voice was like the wailing cry
Of a great nation, bowed in misery;
The deep vast silence of the winter's wood
Was like the hush of a dead multitude.
And, in the centre of its summer shade,
Opened a narrow space of velvet glade,
Where sunbeams, through the foliage slanting steep,
Lay, like a smile upon the lips of sleep.

[1] [In the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 26–44; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 43–60. Offered for the Newdigate Prize at Oxford in 1837, for which the usual day of sending in is March 31. Ruskin was at work on it till the last, and it is therefore given here among verses of that year, instead of (as in the *Poems*, 1850) among those of 1836 (or rather, among those written before Feb. 8, *i.e.* before he became eighteen); but of course much of it was written before his birthday (*i.e.* when he was seventeen). "The Oxford poem will not be done," wrote his father to W. H. Harrison, "till the last minute, and then not well done. John never can or will write for a task given or subject proposed." The prize was won by A. P. Stanley (then of Balliol), afterwards Dean of Westminster, "but Mr. Ruskin says this poem 'ran him close'" (*Editor's Note*, 1891). Stanley's poem may be read in the collection of *Oxford Prize Poems* (1839); see also above, p. xxiv. The only complete MS. of "The Gipsies" (*a*) is a copy in the hand of Ruskin's father, on which W. H. Harrison has written some notes. He was a ready admirer,—marking with commendation the "golden lines" (*e.g.* 14, 119, 335) and the more spirited passages, of one of which he remarks, "worth forty-five millions of the prize-poem;" but also a judicious critic, pointing out the feebleness here and there, and objecting (in lines 434–435) to the "Cockneyish" rhyme of "join" and "divine." This MS. is now inserted in MS. Book vii. Another MS. in the author's hand (*b*) is in the possession of Mr. George Allen, but this only contains lines 1–54 and 295 to the end. In this edition the lines have been numbered for reference.]

[2] ["The author alters Horace from *agat* to *agant*, but without changing the mood of the verb."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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And dew, that thrilled the flowers with full delight,
Fell from the soft eyes of the heaven by night;
And richly there the panting earth put on
A wreathèd robe of blossoms wild and wan:
The purple pansies glowed beneath unseen,*
Like voiceless thoughts within a mind serene;
The passioned primrose blessed the morning gale
And starry lilies shook, in their pavilions pale.[1]
'Twas there, when through the twilight, calm and cool,
The musing sages of the village school
Sought the bright berry, or the savoury root,
Or plucked the hazel's triply clustered fruit,
Or climbed the crackling branch, with dangerous toil,
To seek the songster's nest, and seize its spotted spoil;
When emerald light, through tangled leafage seen,
Betrayed them near that glade so gaily green,
With stealthy step, their slow approach to hide,
The urchins bent the bramble boughs aside;
For often there the copse could scarce conceal
The blue smoke curling from the evening meal.[2]
(To furnish forth that feast, so soon prepared,
Some village dame laments her rifled yard;
Some village cock, his pride of plumage o'er,
Shall call around his clucking dames no more.)
While round the gleaming fire, in circle rude,
The outcast tribe consumed the unblessed food,
While dark eyes flashed, bold, beautiful, and wild,
Through raven hair, and in their lightning smiled,
To hear some Gipsy knight recount, with pride,
How he had borne him at the beadle's side

* Not intended to allude to the allegorical use of this flower, made by Ophelia, in *Hamlet*, and Perdita, in *The Winter's Tale*.[3]

[1] [A reminiscence of Shelley's "Sensitive Plant," where of the lily it is said—

"That the light of its tremulous bells is seen
Through their pavilions of tender green."

For Ruskin's reading of Shelley at this period, see Vol. I. p. 253 *n*.]

[2] [A reminiscence of lines in Rogers' *Pleasures of Memory*, and of Turner's vignette of "The Gipsies" (No. 231 in the National Gallery Collection).]

[3] [*Cf.* Vol. I. p. 157 *n*.]

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In manner worthy of his father's fame;
Had foiled the justice, and had robbed his dame;
Had risked all danger, and escaped mischance;—
Impudence armed with knavery for his lance,
While, half-retired, arrayed in Gipsy state,
An elder crone in musing silence sate.
Well were her murmured words, and mystic tone,
And piercing glance, to village maidens known;
Well was she skilled, beneath the breathing brow,
To read the thoughts and trace the feelings' flow;
And, by the dial of the face, to find
The moving shadows of the secret mind.
The wondering rustics disavowed their fears,
Yet heard her mystic words with anxious ears;
Smiled if she past their doors with blessing by,
And feared the presage of her angered eye.
Sceptics there were, whose more enlightened sense
Refused to own a Gipsy's influence;
Who shook their heads, and called the peasants fools—
Nay! talked of vagrants and of ducking-stools!
But these, the learnèd village doctors, shook
Before her darkened or contemptuous look;
Their reason quailed, and logic's self gave ground,
And sages shuddered if the Gipsy frowned.
But younger minds, less wise, but far more pure
Hung with full faith upon her words obscure;
Intent they listened, for experience knew
Their import secret, and their presage true.
For well the sibyl measured, and designed
The future fortune by the present mind;
And, to her prescient eye, the youthful mien
Betrayed the tints of manhood's varied scene.
Strangely she used the power her art possessed
To stamp the ductile gold of boyhood's breast:
She fired the humble, and the proud controlled,
Now roused the fearful, now repressed the bold.

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Well pleased, the ardent boy, whose youthful might,
First in the game, and unsubdued in fight,
Flushes his cheek, when others pause and pale,
And crowns him leader where his comrades quail;
Hears of his fame in future storms of war,
Purchased with many an honourable scar.
Deceitful words! that give strange passions birth,
As winds of spring arouse the throbbing earth:
Forth from his startled spirit, fierce and free,
The quick thoughts leap, like fire beneath the sea;
And purple-pinioned visions wake and wind
Their golden hair around his dazzled mind,
And fill his senses with a rushing call,
As of the trump to the war-festival:
Round his thrilled heart the swift sensations swim,—
The burning pulses leap from limb to limb;
Kindles his ardent eye, his clenching hand
Grasps, like a steely hilt, the hazel wand;
And firmly falls his slow determined tread,
As haughty conquerors spurn the cold, dim-visaged dead.
Woe for the youthful dream, which burning still,
Fair hope may cherish, and dark fate fulfil!
Alas! the mocking forms, that flit and fade
Through early visions, in the purple shade—
Ghastly, and dim discerned, and pointing pale
To things concealed by hope's thick-dazzling veil.
The desert breeze's pestilential breath;
The midnight-field, bedropped with dewy death;
The mist, instinct with agony of life,
Sobbed from the field of undistinguished strife;
The gnawing fetters, and the dungeon grey,
The teeth of timeless hours, which, day by day,
Feed on the dull heart's desolate decay;
The tears of hopeless grief, the inward groan,
Of those whose love is lost—whose life is left alone.
But the sage sibyl to the softer souled
Another fate, a different fame, foretold:

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The gentle boy, who shunned his playmates rude,
To seek the silver voice of solitude,
And, by some stream, amidst the shadows grey
Of arching boughs, to muse the hours away,
Smiled, as her words, like gentle echoes, fell
Of the high hope with which the secret cell
Of his own heart was lightened; which had led
His young imaginations up, and fed
His thoughts with pleasant fire. Yet who shall know
What lowly lot of unremembered woe
May quench that hope and aspiration high,
In the deep waves of darkened destiny?
What fate unblessed by any mourner's tear,
May crown the hope, may close the brief career?
A few short years, slow withering as they move,
Traversed by burning thoughts; a light of love
Smiling at its own sorrow, fancy fed;
A heart to its own desolation dead;
Pale osier withes, in decent order bound;
And a soft smile of flowers along a low green mound.

But when the woods were veiled with twilight shade,
Came fearful feet along the velvet glade,
Light as the tinkling leaves, that wander wide
When Vallombrosa mourns her prostrate pride,
With fitful fall, as throbbed the gentle breast,
Whose hope excited, and whose awe repressed.
Then, nearer drawn, like white-robed dryad seen,
The blushes gleaming through the leafage green;
The village maiden came, and, bright with youth,
Gave the white hand, and sought the words of sooth.
The keen-eyed sibyl traced each crimson line,
As pale and passive lay the fingers fine;
And watched the orient blood, with flushing flow,
By turns enkindle, and forget to glow;
The eyes, averted to her glance severe,
Betrayed their flashing hope or quivering fear;

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She saw, and speaking, wove, with cruel art,
Soft silver meshes round the youthful heart,
And touched its core with lightning thoughts, in vain;
Played with its passion, sported with its pain.
Oh! cruel words, to rouse emotions there
Whose voice is rapture, but whose end—despair;
That suck the blood, yet fan, with vampyre wing,
The heart, until it bless the agony they bring.
For, sibyl, thine no transitory power,
No passing voice, no mockery of an hour.
Thou canst not know how dearly may be bought
That moment's kindling of the girlish thought,
Of midnight wakings, and day dreams, and years
Of sickened hope, and unavailing tears.

Such the poor remnant of the faith that seemed
To read the roll of destinies it dreamed.
Small triumph now, for that once lofty art
To thrill a youth's, or break a maiden's heart;
Or raise, by happy chance or artful wile,
The peasant's wonder, or the sage's smile!
Its higher influence lost, for now no more
Shall monarchs own the presage as of yore;*
When on some mountain's moon-illumined height,
The Eastern shepherd watched the moving night,†
(That soul-like night, whose melancholy smile
Looks lovely down on every Eastern isle),
Distinguishing the stars, that, charged with doom,
Passed on and upward through the glorious gloom.

Ye fiery-footed spirits! that do use
To tread the midnight darkness, and confuse
All æther with your shooting, and intrace,
With lines of rushing fire, the restless space

* As in the time of Catherine of Medicis, and of Henry III. and Henry IV. of France.

† Astrology—certainly a science derived either from the Assyrians or Egyptians—appears to have been the only superstition believed in by the wandering tribes.

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Of silence infinite; ye meteors pale!
Vapours and mists that burn, and float, and fail,
For ever and for ever, and which bless
The gloom of the unbounded loneliness
Of the wild void with your swift passing on;
Ye tearful stars, and planets weak and wan!—
Meet gods, methinks, were ye for those whose breast
Was but one weariness without a rest;
Whose life was desolation, and whose soul,
Hopeless and homeless, knew no soft control
From the sweet chains that other beings bind,
The love of God or man—of country or of kind.

Along the reedy shore of Nilus' flood
Dark Egypt bows before her monster god;
And meeting millions, mute with awe, uplift
The temple tall, above the sand-waves swift;
And mourn their prayers unheard with lengthened wail,
Led by the measured voice of many a priestess pale.
By Ganges' sullen billows, blood besprent,
Bereavèd mothers lift their loud lament;
Amidst the desert place of mountains grey,
The sculptured idols sit in rude array.
Through many a sombre isle, and mighty fane,
The prostrate crowds revere, adore, in vain;
And wake the silent shore and sacred wave
With notes of worship wild within the carvèd cave.

But, 'midst the wandering tribe, no reverenced shrine
Attests a knowledge of the Power Divine.
By these alone, of mortals most forlorn,
Are priest and pageant met with only scorn;
To all mankind beside, through earth and sky,
Is breathed an influence of Deity.
To that great One, whose Spirit interweaves
The pathless forests with their life of leaves;

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And lifts the lowly blossoms, bright in birth,
Out of the cold, black, rotting, charnel earth;
Walks on the moon-bewildered waves by night,
Breathes in the morning breeze, burns in the evening light;
Feeds the young ravens when they cry; uplifts
The pale-lipped clouds along the mountain clifts;[1]
Moves the pale glacier on its restless path;
Lives in the desert's universal death;
And fills, with that one glance, which none elude,
The grave, the city, and the solitude.
To This, the mingled tribes of men below,
Savage and sage, by common instinct bow;
And, by one impulse, all the earth abroad,
Or carve the idol, or adore the god:
But these, the earth's wide wanderers, mocked of fate,—
These, the most impious, most desolate,
Careless of unseen power or semblant stone,—
Live in this lost and lifeless world alone.

Oh, life most like to death! No mother mild
Lifts the light fingers of her dark-eyed child
In early offered prayer; no loving one
Curtains the cradle round with midnight orison;
Nor guides, to form the Mighty Name, the slips
And early murmurs of unconscious lips.
No reverend sire, with tales of heavenly truth,
Instructs the awed, attentive ear of youth.
Through life's short span, whatever chance betide,
No hope can joy, no fear can guard or guide;
No trust supports in danger or despair;
Grief hath no solace, agony no prayer.
The lost are lost for ever, and the grave
Is as a darkness deep, whence none can save
The loved or the lamented, as they fade,
Like dreams at dawn, into that fearful shade.

[1] [Misprinted "cliffs" in ed. of 1891.]

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Oh! then what words are they whose peaceful power
Can soothe the twilight time of terror's hour;
Or check the frighted gasp of fainting breath;
Or clothe with calmness the cold lips of death;
Or quench the fire within the phrenzied eye,
When it first dreams the dreams that never die?
O Grave, how fearful is thy victory!
O Death, how dread thy sting, when not to be[1]
Is the last hope, whose coldness can control
The meteor fires that mock and sear the soul;
When through the deep delirium's darkness red
Come thoughts, that join the living with the dead;
Fancies too fearful to be dreams alone,
And forms which Madness knows are not her own,—
Which even annihilation cannot quell—
The fire of vengeance, and the fear of hell.

Such death is death indeed which nor bestows
Peace on the soul, nor on the clay repose.
For these, no grave is pale with blossoms round;
No hallowed home, in consecrated ground,
Opens its narrow arms, and bosom cold,
To soothe their sleep beneath the moveless mould;
No whispered prayer, no sacred service said,
Bequeaths to dust the deeply reverenced dead:
No mossy stone, when other memories cease,
Shall keep his name, or mark his place of peace.
With his (although the churchyard room be wide,)
No dust shall mingle, none shall sleep beside;
Unwept, unknown, he lies: the outcast band,
To whom the world is all a foreign land,
Remember not the graves their fathers own,
But pass away, and leave their lost alone.

The wandering ostrich marks her place of rest;
The lonely mountain eagle knows her nest;

[1] [This line was misprinted in the *Poems* (1850) with an exclamation mark at the end of it, and in the ed. of 1891 the words "not to be" were italicised.]

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The sobbing swiftness of the faint gazelle
Longs for her refuge green,—her living well;
The many wandering tribes of weary wing
All have their home, their rest, their welcoming;
The lonely Indian, when his dark canoe
Glides o'er the sea, and sleeps upon the blue,
Faints for the foliage of his native isle,
To break the sea's "innumerable smile;" *
When through the desert,[1] far from haunts of man,
Winds, with slow pace, the panting caravan;
When, scorched and weary, move the mingled bands,
O'er mocking vapours and deceitful sands,
With keen and eager eye, the desert bred
Explores the waste horizon's dimness dead;
Through the thick heaven's bluely burning breath,
Purple with pestilence and dark with death;
How thrills his aching heart, when, far and few,
The clustered palm trees meet his misty view,—
The group of palm trees tall, that grow beside
The Arab village where his fathers died:
He asks no gardens gay, no champaigns green,
No milder clime, to fertilise the scene;
To him the desert rock, the palm trees tall,
The fountain pure, are home, and home is all.

The mountaineer, returning from afar,
Sees in the dim cloud, like a guiding star,
The peak, with everlasting winter pale,
Whose base is bordered by his native vale;
Scents the keen air which nerves his childish limb;
And o'er his swelling spirit comes a hymn
Of gladness and rejoicing,—soft and low
The voices of the hours of long ago.

* Ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα.—Æsch. [*Prom. Vinct.* 90].[2]

[1] ["Deserts" in the ed. of 1891.]

[2] [The passage was included also in the motto prefixed to "The Exile of St. Helena," below, p. 45. See also *Modern Painters*, vol. i. pt. ii. sec. v. ch. iii. § 40 *n*, and vol. ii. pt. iii. sec. ii. ch. iii. § 9 *n*.]

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What boots it that the rocks around be rude,
And dark the countenance of solitude?
How dear is desolation, where have dwelt
The feelings we have yearned for, long unfelt!
How loved the accents of departed years,
That fill the heart with ecstasy of tears;
That touch, and try, and wake, with pleasant pain,
The chords we thought would never wake again!
Those only know, through lengthened years who roam,
How blest the native land, how beautiful the home.
Woe for the lot of that abandoned race,
For whom the wide earth hath no dwelling place;
The doomed, with weary breast, and restless feet,
No bourne to reach, no welcoming to meet!
Alas! the very winds and waves had rest,
Far in the purple silence[1] of the West,
That now lament, along a colder coast,
The home of Heaven, the sleep that they have lost,
Hoping no peace: but those are more forlorn,
Who, having none to hope, have none to mourn.
To these, less blest than bird, or wave, or wind,
All climes are strange, all countries are unkind.
Oh! the deep silence of the lonely heart,
When no known voices make it move or start,
Until its numbed emotions faint, and lie
In an unwaking, moveless agony,—
The peace of powerless pain—and waste away,
Though the strong spirit struggle with decay,
In yearning for the thoughts it hath not known;
As the deep sea, when it is left alone,
Doth pine for agitation, and will rot *
Like corpses in the sleep that dreameth not;

* "The very deep did rot,—
That ever this should be,—
Yea, slimy things did crawl with legs
Upon the slimy sea."—*Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner.*

[1] [This was a happy phrase which did not come at once. The author's MS. (*b*) has "secret chambers" for "purple silence."]

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So pines, so fades the spirit, when unmoved
By any voice, remembered, known, or loved.
Such pangs of silence in the hearts have birth
Of those who have no fellowship on earth;
For whom waste wilds and desert skies extend
Paths without peace, and wanderings without end;
Life without light, and death obscure with fear,
The world without a home, the grave without a tear.

Yet have they their inheritance—the force
Of that high influence, which pursues its course
Through breathing spirits, as an eagle cleaves
The red clouds which the weak wind interweaves.
Hast thou not watched the dark eye's changing light,
Flashing for ever through its living night,
Where the wild thoughts, deep, oh! how strangely deep,
Their passioned presence and soft motion keep?
There lightens forth the spirit visible,
Which, from the mind's dark, narrow, clay-cold cell,
Gives wings to the expatiation wide,
Which is its light, its life, its being, and its pride.
It is the universal soul that fills
The airs and echoes of a thousand hills,
And all the etherial clouds, whose wings unfurled
Fan the swift sickness of the restless world,
The green sea's ghastly waves above, beneath
The sere leaves in their Autumn dance of death;[1]
All things that move on earth are swift and free,
All full of the same fire of lovely Liberty:
This, this is their inheritance—the might
That fills the tyrant's throne with fear, his night
With dreams of desolation; that unbinds
The wrath of retribution in the minds
Of those whom he has crushed; and, from the hand
Breaking the fetter, gives and guides the brand;

[1] [*Cf.* the third stanza of the lines entitled "Memory," below, p. 80. For "sere" leaves here, the author first wrote "dead" and then "brown."]

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This is the birthright, which alone can be
Their home, their hope, their joy, their trust, their deity.

"Ye abject tribes, ye nations poor and weak!"
(Thus might, methinks, the haughty wanderer speak),
"Yours be the life of peace, the servile toil;
Yours be the wealth, its despicable spoil;
Stoop to your tyrant's yoke with mildness meet,
Cringe at his throne, and worship at his feet;
Revere your priesthood's consecrated guilt;
Bow in the temples that your dreams have built;
Adore your gods—the visionary plan
Of dotards grey, in mockery of man:—
To me the life hath wildest welcoming,
That fears nor man, nor spirit, priest, nor king.
Be mine no simple home, no humble hearth,—
My dome, the heaven,—my dwelling, all the earth.
No birth can bind me, in a nation's cause,
To fight their battles, or obey their laws.
The priest may speak, and women may grow pale;
Me he derides not with his ghastly tale;
Virtue and vice, the names by which the wise
Have governed others, I alike despise.
No love can move me, and no fear can quell,
Nor check my passions, nor control my will.
The soul, whose body fears no change of clime,
Aims at no virtue, trembles at no crime;
But, free and fearless as its clay, shall own
No other will upon its fiery throne.
When fate commands it, come the mortal strife!
I fear nor dying, nor an after life.
Such as it hath been must my spirit be,—
Destroyed, not shackled,—if existent, free.
Let not my limbs in weakened age consume,
Nor pale diseases waste me to the tomb;

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Let not the frost of winters in my blood
Give to the grave a cold, corrupted food.
Mine be the death of lightning swift and red,
Born out of darkness, and in darkness dead:
No other will the forkèd flash can guide,
Nor tame the terror of its path of pride:
Forth from its natal cloud it works its will,—
Then pauses in its power, and all is dark and still."

Such are the thoughts of Freedom, unrestrained;
Such is the good which men have felt, or feigned,
To be the highest of all gifts that bless
The mortal dwellers in this wilderness.
Freedom—with which the heaven of Hellas burned,
For which her warriors bled, her exiles mourned,
Till, like the rushing of a meteor's hair,
Waved the wide banner through her purple air;—
Freedom—the loved possession which, when lost,
Myriads have sought along the lonely coast
Where liberty is none,—whence none return,—
Freedom—who kindles heavenly stars, which burn
Within the heart she loves, and lifts the brave
Above the earthy thoughts that would their souls enslave,
Becomes, if unrestrained, so deep a curse
As nations should grow pale at;—never worse
Hath worked the ruin of the kings of Time.
It wakes the blackly-waving weeds of crime,
Which, when the dark, deep surge of passion raves,
Do turn and toss within its wildest waves.
It is the standard, whose dark folds unfurled
Shade the red ruins of a wasted world;
It is the shout that Madness laughs to hear,
When dark Rebellion grasps his gory spear,
And sends his minions forth, who never cease
From withering up all pity and all peace:

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Fearful as is the pestilence's path,
And feeding, wormlike, on the nation's death
Which they have cast into the dark abysm
Of guilty Freedom, worst of despotism.

There's but one liberty of heart and soul,
A thing of beauty, an unfelt control,—
A flow, as waters flow in solitude,
Of gentle feeling, passioned, though subdued,—
When Love and Virtue, and Religion join
To weave their bonds of bliss, their chains divine,
And keep the heaven-illumined heart they fill
Softly communing with itself, and still
In the sole freedom that can please the good,
A mild and mental, unfelt servitude.[1]

[Age 17–18.][2]

[1] ["It is worth remarking that the author's religion and moral tone were already more powerful than his romanticism; so that he does not draw upon reminiscences of Scott's descriptions of Gipsy freedom, but anticipates his own doctrines,—*e.g.* in *Seven Lamps*, ch. vii. and note,—'that treacherous phantom which men call Liberty,'—'not Liberty, but Law.' The concluding couplet paraphrases 'Whose service is perfect freedom' and 'My yoke is easy and My burden is light.'"—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[2] [The next piece in the *Poems*, 1850, was the "Song" from *Leoni*—"Full broad and bright is the silver light;" already given in Vol. I. p. 295.]

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THE SCYTHIAN GRAVE[1]

The following stanzas refer to some very elegant and affecting customs of the Scythians, as avouched by Herodotus (*Melpomene* [Book iv.], 71), relative to the burial of their kings,* round whose tombs they were wont to set up a troop of fifty skeleton scarecrows—armed corpses—in a manner very horrible, barbarous, and indecorous; besides sending out of the world, to keep the king company, numerous cupbearers, grooms, lackeys, coachmen, and cooks; all which singular, and, to the individuals concerned, somewhat objectionable proceedings, appear to have been the result of a feeling, pervading the whole nation, of the poetical and picturesque.

* These are the kings to whom the prophecies in the Old Testament refer:—"They shall go down to the grave with their weapons of war, though they were the terror of the mighty in the land of the living."

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[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1838, pp. 116–118, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 46–48; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 61–63. There is no MS. extant. The two printed texts differ only in minor points of punctuation. The piece is here printed from the *Poems*, 1850, in which, however (as in *F.O.*), the lines were not indented (as they were in the ed. of 1891). Reprinted in the American ed. of 1882, pp. 13–16. "In the prefatory note the American editor changes the ironical '*very elegant* and affecting customs' into '*peculiar* and affecting,' etc., not grasping the light and sarcastic style of all these prefatory notes,—a survival of the humorous strand of thought which everywhere entertwines with the sentimental, as in the 'Iteriad,'—in the 1833 Tour, where it appears in the prose paragraphs of the original, and in the 1835 Tour, where it comes in as the 'Don Juan manner, artfully combined with that of Childe Harold.' This feeling was one of the things which could not be expressed in the sentimental style which the author finally adopted in his 'serious' verse-writing, and it contributed to make him abandon poetry. The footnote (above) refers to Ezekiel, xxxii. 27, which speaks of 'Meshech and Tubal,' the Muskai and Tuplai of Assyrian inscriptions, Moschi and Tibareni of classic history,—not Scythians, according to Herodotus, though mentioned in his Book iii. ch. 94, as tribes bordering on the Euxine. Mr. Ruskin says, 'When I went to Oxford, I was put by my tutor into Herodotus, out of whom I immediately gathered materials enough to write my Scythian drinking-song [Banquet], in imitation of the "Giaour"' (*Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 209). It is possible that 'The Scythian Banquet Song' as well as 'The Scythian Grave' may have been written in 1837, and that all the Herodotean poems, viz. these two, with 'The Scythian Guest,' 'Recreant,' 'Aristodemus,' 'Psammenitus,' and 'Arion,' may have been thought out much earlier than the dates assigned them in *Poems*."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. The first six lines of "The Scythian Grave" occur on the back of a sheet of MS. (*c*) of "The Exile of St. Helena" (see p. 45, *n.* 2). The quotation from Ezekiel (xxxii. 27) is abbreviated and not quite accurate, "are gone down to hell with their weapons," etc., being correct.]

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I

They laid the lord
Of all the land
Within his grave of pride;
They set the sword
Beside the hand
That could not grasp, nor guide:
They left, to soothe and share his rest
Beneath the moveless mould,
A lady, bright as those that live,
But oh, how calm and cold!
They left, to keep due watch and ward,
Thick vassals round their slumbering lord—
Ranged in menial order all—
They may hear, when *he* can call.

II

They built a mound
Above the breast
Whose haughty heart was still;
Each stormy sound
That wakes the west,
Howls o'er that lonely hill.
Underneath, an armed troop
In stalwart order stay:
Flank to flank they stand, nor stoop
Their lances, day by day.
Round the dim sepulchral cliff,
Horsemen fifty, fixed and stiff,
Each with his bow, and each with his brand,
With his bridle grasped in his steadfast hand.

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III

The soul of sleep
May dim the brow,
And check the soldier's tread;
But who can keep
A guard so true
As do the dark-eyed dead?
The foul hyenas howl and haunt
About their charnel lair;
The flickering rags of flesh—they flaunt
Within the plague-struck air:
But still the skulls do gaze and grin,
Though the worms have gnawed the nerves within;
And the jointed toes, and the fleshless heel,
Clatter and clank in their stirrup of steel.

IV

The snows are swift
That glide so pale
Along the mountain dim;
Beneath their drift
Shall rust the mail,
And blanch the nerveless limb:
While, shower on shower, and wreath on wreath,
From vapours thunder-scarred,*
Surround the misty mound of death,
And whelm its ghastly guard;
Till those who held the earth in fear,
Lie meek, and mild, and powerless here,
Without a single sworded slave
To keep their name, or guard their grave.

[Age 18.]

* It is one of the peculiarities of the climate, according to Herodotus, that it thunders in the winter, not in the summer.

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1838[1]

THE EXILE OF ST. HELENA[2]

"How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished!"
—2 Samuel i. 27.

Ὦ δῖος αἰθὴρ καὶ ταχύπτεροι πνοαί,
. . . . ποντίων τε κυμάτων
ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα, παμμῆτόρ τε γῆ,
καὶ τὸν πανόπτην κύκλον ἡλίου καλῶ. . . .
δέρχθηθ' οἷαις αἰκίαισιν
διακναιόμενος τὸν μυριετῆ
χρόνον ἀθλεύσω.
—Æschylus, *Prometheus Vinctus*, 88–95.[3]

[1] [Ruskin's verses of 1838 show motives similar to those of 1837 (see above, p. 19 *n*). He competed again for the Newdigate, the subject this time being Napoleon ("The Exile of St. Helena"). He also wrote three more Herodotean pieces—"The Scythian Banquet Song," "The Recreant," and "Aristodemus at Platæa." The paraphrase from Horace (p. 79) may also be called an academic exercise, though the concluding lines may have had some personal meaning to Ruskin, who was deeply in love with Adèle. The other pieces of the year tell their own story as variations on the same theme; among the latest of them is the "Canzonet" on p. 83, which seems to have been suggested by the visit paid by Adèle and her sisters to Herne Hill for the Christmas holidays. Ruskin's tour in 1838 was to the Lake Country and Scotland, but again it was not recorded in verse. During the year he was finishing *The Poetry of Architecture*, and after returning from Scotland he wrote the paper "On the Propriety of Combining Works of Art with the Sublimity of Nature" (Vol. I. p. 247). In 1838 he seems also to have written some portion of "The Broken Chain" (see below, p. 132 *n*).]

[2] [In the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 53–66; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 71–84. Sent in for the Newdigate Prize before March 31, 1838. The prize was won by J. H. Dart of Exeter, for whom see *Præterita*, ii. ch. viii. § 151. He and Ruskin had been schoolfellows at Mr. Dale's, and at Oxford "established poetical friendship, and contended in all honour for the Newdigate, reading our best passages to each other for improving censure. Dart, very deservedly, won it that year." Dart's poem may be read in the collection of *Oxford Prize Poems* (1839). Ruskin's father was prepared for his son's failure to win the prize. Writing to W. H. Harrison just after the poem had been sent in, he said: "The unwillingness to remould or compress will be fatal to all his Oxford poems. . . . I have no hope of the last from its mere ease and carelessness." One MS. of the entire poem in his father's hand, but without some of the notes, is extant (*a*), and is now inserted in MS. Book vii.; another (MS. Book x.), in the hand of a secretary, is of lines 1–185 (*b*). A third MS. is in the possession of Mr. George Allen (*c*). This is in Ruskin's hand, except lines 1–8 and 11, in his father's hand. There are no notes in any of the MSS. A comparison of the MSS. with each other and with the text (here reprinted from the *Poems*, 1850) shows that if the author did not compress, he revised a great deal. The lines are here numbered for reference.]

[3] [O Sky divine, O Winds of pinions swift,
O fountain-heads of Rivers, and O thou,
Illimitable laughter of the sea!
O Earth, the Mighty Mother, and thou Sun,
Whose orbed light surveyeth all—
Behold me who must here sustain
The marring agonies of pain,
Wrestling with torture, doomed to bear
Eternal ages year on year.

(E. D. A. Morshead's translation.) For other references to Æschylus, see above, p. 36 *n*.]

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SYNOPSIS

INTRODUCTION—Graves of Achilles and Napoleon—Comparison of the fates of Sennacherib, Alexander, and Hannibal with that of Napoleon—Circumstances of his fall slightly touched upon—Campaigns—The Island and the Exile—Feelings of the French relative to his humiliation—His own feelings and memories—Events of his past life alluded to—The ardour of many in his cause unabated—Speculations as to the cause of his fall—His death—Meditations above his grave—Conclusion.

WHEN war-worn Greece accused, in grief of heart,[1]
Her adverse fates, and cursed the Dardan dart,
Meet was the mound on Ilion's plain, to keep
Her hero's ashes and protect his sleep;
The mound that looks along the level shore,
Where its cold inmate warred—and wars no more.
So deemed the blind Ionian, when he stood
Near the soft murmur of Scamander's flood,
Till all the patriot fire responsive rose,
Poured the full song, and wove the exulting close,
Hymning his country's fame beside her chief's repose.
But he who—musing where the golden grain *
Glows fair and fruitful on Marengo's plain,

* *The golden grain.*—The field of Marengo at the present time is chiefly sown with Indian-corn (which furnishes the peasant of North Italy with his principal article of food), and intersected with rows of mulberry trees.

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[1] [MS. *c* has, but erases, the following lines, at the side of which Ruskin's father has justly written, "A much finer beginning than the present one":—

"A spirit came across my heart, and cried,
'Lament, for power has laid his sword aside.
A lofty throne is desolate to-day,
A voice is hushed, a shield is cast away.'
Another spirit crossed my heart, and cried,
'Rejoice, the dropping wings of death are dried.
O'er the calm plains the shouts of battle cease,
And gathered nations raise the songs of peace.
Cursed were the harp, whose cords were cold and sad
When the joined cities of the earth were glad;
Cursed were the harp, whose triumph could be loud
O'er the fall'n tenant of the isle, and shroud—'
Then be the measure mingled, and the lyre,
Of varied chord, and fluctuating fire.
From lip to lip be this the chorus led,
'Peace to the living, glory to the dead.'"]

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Recalls to fancy's eye the shifting scene *
Of fiercer fight, and conquest far more keen
Than Ilion waged, or Greece achieved, can trace
No record of its hero's resting-place.[1]
But foreign hands a distant grave have made,
And nameless earth upon his breast is laid;
And few lament his final rest profaned,
His tomb unhonoured, and his glory stained.
And dark he leaves the page, and dumb the lute;
The chronicler severe,† the muses mute.
Alas, how justly! since they cannot raise
The warrior's glory to the patriot's praise.
And if they follow, by the Atlantic wave,
The tyrant's footstep to the Exile's grave,
How shall the burden of their song be borne?
'Twere insult to rejoice, impiety to mourn.
Angel! ordained of highest Heaven to guide,
As it has willed, the steps of human pride;
Whose presence guards, with more than mortal power,
A mortal's phrenzy through its ordered hour,—
Thy work was mighty when, in purple state,
The swart Assyrian smiled at Salem's gate:
Thy work was mighty by the Indian deep,
When Ammon mourned his sword's unwonted sleep:
Thy work was mighty when, on Cannæ's plain,
Exulting Carthage spurned the silent slain:

* *The shifting scene.*—Alluding to the sudden turn of fortune which gave Napoleon the victory.

† *The chronicler severe.*—Napoleon's history will never be well written. Men are too much interested in the shame or the glory with which he covered the flags of their nations to be impartial, until time shall have rendered their feelings just, and then it will have destroyed their materials.

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[1] [MS. *c* here adds the following lines:—

"Where once he stood to watch the charging line,
Nightly the bell from San Juliano's shrine
With waves of sound awakes the purple air,
And calls the peasant to his peaceful prayer."

With these lines *cf.* the prose passage on Napoleon's monument in Vol. I. p. 253.]

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Thy work was mightiest when, like levin * flame,
Down the dark Alps the Gallic Consul came,
Led his swift legions o'er the necks of kings,
Bowed Europe's pride beneath his withering wings,
Wreathed regal purple round his warrior limbs,
And wrote his restless path in dust of diadems.
Angel! whose touch is death, whose glance, decay,
Humbler of sworded strength and sceptred sway,
Dark was thy presence, when the desert's breath
Bade pale Assyria keep her camp of death;
Dark was thy presence, when, with sudden peace,
Deep hollowed marble clasped the boast of Greece: †
Dark was thy presence, when, in powerless hate,
The Carthaginian sought a stranger's gate:
Darkest thy presence, when the dead lay piled
In the slow flight of conquest's chosen child,
And God's own anger smote, without a sword,
The millioned might of France's fiery lord.
Then bowed his crestless helm and shattered shield
To the foul dust, on many a fatal field,—
Yet partly spared at first. The warrior's smile
Again comes lightening from the lonely isle;
And France replaces, with a younger host,
The urnless ashes of her legions lost.
Her dark troops gather swiftly. Who shall meet
The battle-murmur of their mingled feet?
Up, England! for thine honour. From afar
She hears the call,—she pours a wave of war;
And, 'midst the myriad tread, now low, now loud
Of columns crashing through quick lighted cloud

* *Levin.*—I am afraid this word has no higher authority than Scott's, who uses it perpetually when speaking of lightning.[1]

† "Cum tamen a figulis munitam intraverat urbem
Sarcophago contentus erit."—*Juv.* x. 171.

[1] [*e.g. Marmion*, i. xxiii.; but see *New English Dictionary*, for earlier references to Spenser, Gower, and Chaucer.]

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With carnage choked, the desolated blue
Of day fades weakly over Waterloo.
Ten thousand stars their heavenly thrones attain;
One rises not,* and will not rise again.
Its place in Heaven is dark; and he, whose pride
It once was swift to lead, and bright to guide,
Hath gone down to the dwelling of a slave,—
A dim place, half oblivion, half grave;
And all the crowd of kingly destinies
That once lethargic lay, and lulled, in his,†
Stretch their dark limbs again, with shivering thrill
Of life renewed, and independent will.
The echo of his fall lies like a trance
On windless banner and unlifted lance;
And the pale brows of men, and voiceless lips
(As leaves lie still beneath the sun's eclipse)
Are pressed with awe, through all the earth abroad,
At the swift sheathing of the sword of God.
Far in the southern sea, where changing night
Rolls round the pole its orbs of stranger light,
And wandering eyes their native stars forget,
A narrow isle is solitary set;
The purple light of evening's swift decline
Bathes its calm coast, and gilds its bordering brine.
From the grey crest of a commanding steep,
A lonely figure gazes on the deep:
Perchance some fisher finds his parting prow
By its white furrow on the blue below;
Some sun-worn peasant's lingering delight
Catches the coolness of the breeze of night;

* *One rises not.*—When Cardinal Fesch was endeavouring to persuade Napoleon to abandon his designs upon Russia, the Emperor led him to the window. "Do you see that star?" "No," replied the Cardinal. "But I do," said Napoleon, and left the prelate, as if he had fully answered his objections.

† As the possessive pronoun here is the most important word in the sentence, I may perhaps be excused for letting it conclude the line.

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Yet doth it stand, as peasant never stood,
With martial mien, and majesty of mood.
Nor peasant glance, nor vulgar mind is there;
But a dark quiet of serene despair;
Serene, though quivering lip and kindling eye
Struggle more weakly with the memory
Which a quenched madness, and a cold control,
Seal on the brow, and gyve into the soul.
Can it be thou! despiser of the spear,
Spirit of armies, desolate, and here!
See'st thou the red sun, lowering on the flood,
Send its swift waters to the shore, like blood?*
Well doth thy prison mock thy throne of old,—
That throne, by surges washed, how dark, how cold!
Which those who mourn for those who shed complain,
Not that they spent, but that they spent in vain.
France never wept for all the mists of life
That reeked from every blood-hot place of strife;
Nor mourned the bones of brave men laid so low,
To blanch by sea and shore, in sand and snow;
But mourns the life she lost, the love she gave,
All spent for one who dares to die a slave.
Oh! exiled less in body than in name,
Far from thy country, farther from thy fame:
As the weak ashes,† which the billowy beat
Of the dull ocean crumbles at thy feet,
Are to their former strength, when earthquake spread,
With waves of living fire, their heaving bed,
Art thou to what thou wast. Dost thou not start
To feel such shadows passing o'er thy heart,

* *Waters like blood.*—Such an effect is frequent in southern latitudes. I have seen it beautifully over the Gulf of Genoa, with Elba in the distance.[1] So in 2 Kings, iii. 22. ["And the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood."]

† *As the weak ashes.*—St. Helena, like the neighbouring island of Ascension, is an extinct volcano.

[1] [Ruskin was at Genoa in 1833. *Cf.* below, "The Broken Chain," pt. v. st. xxiii., p. 185 *n.*]

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As once were each a destiny, though now
Nothing but thoughts, and on thy brain and brow,
Pale, powerless images of lost command,
Traced with such finger as the sea's on sand,
Struggling like phrenzied dreamers, with the sense
Of their most unaccustomed impotence?
Oh! who can trace the swift and living line,
The mingled madness, of such dreams as thine?
Lo! through the veiling shadows of despair,
Pale faces gaze, and fiery eyeballs glare,
Till thy soul quails at what they seek and see,
Knowing them long since dark to all but thee.
Then softer features soothe thee, long forgot,
Of those who loved thy childhood, and are not;
And gentle voices fall, with sudden fear,
On the quick sense of thy remembering ear,
First heard in youth, now mingled with the noise
Of battle wavering in contested poise,
Each passing slowly to a shout, or moan—
The same in voice, though older in its tone.
The contest thickens; to thy kindling sight
A pale plume * dashes through its closest night,
Before whose checkless charge the lances fail,
The banners tremble, and the squadrons quail.
'Tis past—and through the air's unbroken sleep,
A muffled drum beats distantly and deep.
Again the dream is changed, and noontide glows
On Scrivia's plain and Cervin's † purple snows.[1]
O'er the red field thy rallying columns sweep,
Swift as the storm, resistless as the deep:

* *A pale plume.*—Alluding to the death of Murat, whose white plume used to be a rallying-point in battle.

† *Cervin.*—The Matterhorn.

[1] ["'Cervin's *purple* snows' at 'noontide' perhaps alludes to the Z'Mutt glacier, or Red Glacier, as *Modern Painters* (vol. iv. ch. xvi. § 13) prefers to call it,—'covered with blocks of reddish gneiss.' 'Scrivia' is an affluent of the Po, near Marengo, whose 'passage' was one of the first successes of the Napoleonic arms in Italy."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. *Cf.* below, "The Broken Chain," pt. iii. st. iv., p. 149.]

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The hostile lines in wild disorder fly;
Bormida's waters drift them as they die.
The vision fades, and through its sudden gloom,
Thy startled eye discerns a lonely tomb,*
Beneath Mont Velan, where faint voices bless
The unwearied watchers of the wilderness.
Then darker scenes, by wilder thoughts displayed,
Distinct succeed, and fill the dreadful shade:
Places of human peace, or natural pride,
Withering in flames, or desolately dyed
With life of all who loved them once, outpoured
On roofless hearths left silent by the sword.
Last rise, recalled upon thy burning brain,
The lofty altar, and columnar fane;
Pontiff and peer, beneath the marble gate,
In sacred pride and royal reverence wait;
And one is there, of gentle eye and brow,
Whose love was timid then, how lonely now!
Whose constant heart, by every injury torn,
Thy grief will crush, though it could bear thy scorn.
And she is there, and pomp of kingly crowd,
Around thee gathered, and before thee bowed.
Hark! how the shouting nations round thy throne
The iron crown and doveless sceptre own.
Wake, wake; avenger, victor, tyrant, slave;
Thy strength was withered by the God who gave!
Behold thy guarding pomp, ribbed sand, and hissing wave.
Yet not unmourned, though aidless, is thy fate,
Though lonely, not left wholly desolate;
Even when the sun it worshipped once is set,
Can veteran love its former faith forget?
Still to thy lot the hearts of thousands cleave,
Fierce to avenge, or eager to retrieve;

* *A lonely tomb.*—Desaix, as is well known, is buried in the chapel of the Augustines of St. Bernard.[1]

[1] [Ruskin had noted the tomb on his visit to the St. Bernard in 1835; see Vol. I. p. 526.]

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Still at thy name the warrior fires arise,
Glow in the heart, and lighten in the eyes;
From quiet swords their rusty scabbards fall,
And blunt spears tinkle on the idle wall.
Oh! if the hope of France's wounded heart
Clings to thee, crushed and fall'n as now thou art,
How had she rallied, in thy dangerous hour,
To save thine honour, or to prop thy power!
Had the stern will of thine ambition spared
Her life, to love thee, or her strength to guard,—
Had the high soul, which all the earth subdued,
Learned but to rule its own inquietude,—
The cries of men, and all the noise of war
Had shrunk in whispers from thy throne afar;
The motion of Earth's spears had sunk aside,
Bowed down in the calm presence of thy pride;
As, underneath the west wind's foot is bent
The pointed grass in surges innocent.
The madness, and the murmurs, and the hate
Of nations had sunk silent; thou had'st sate
As sits the morning star, supremely bright
Amidst the heaven's weak winds and interwoven light.*
And wherefore art thou here? why poured in vain
The tide of war on every wasted plain,
Till Europe's farthest torrent to the sea
Rolled crimson with the price of victory?
Thy doom was sealed, dark spirit, at thy birth,
Out of the black, cold ruin of the earth,

* *Amidst the heaven's weak winds.*—For the first part of this line I must solicit the indulgence of its astronomical judges. For testimony to the truth of the epithet *interwoven*, I must appeal to the observation of all who are in the habit of walking before breakfast. The fleecy clouds of a fine morning are almost always subject to the influence of two or more atmospherical currents, acting at right angles to each other; so that they resemble a bright warp and woof, which, since by reflecting the horizontal rays it gives all its brilliancy to the sky, may itself be considered as light.

For the opinions expressed in this passage I hope no lengthened apology will be thought necessary. Surely, could his ambition have been restrained, the government of Napoleon was peculiarly adapted to the genius of the

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When phrenzied France stood fierce amidst the cry
Of her fair children in their agony.
Mocking, by lifeless street and temple gate,
God's image, and His altar desecrate.
Might it not seem that Deity had sent
An angry spirit through the firmament,
Which went forth, like a tempest, to provide
Graves for the atheist and the homicide;
Which underneath its feet, like stubble, trod
Those who had shown no mercy, feared no God,
(Till murder felt the falchion's vengeful edge,
And silence dwelt, where once was sacrilege);
Swept from their place the guilty sire and son,
Then sunk itself, its fated mission done,
And withered to mortality? Farewell,
Thou breath of battle! Ocean like a knell
Rings hollow on the shore. No more for thee
Shall love avail, or ancient constancy.
It comes, the end of mortal hope and ill,
The passing pain and the enduring chill:
The silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl
Is broken at the fountain; the dark soul
To God, who gave it, hath returned again,
And worms feed sweetly on the fear of men.
Ambition! this thy kingdom is not wide;
Glory! thy home is dark,—thine lowly, Pride.
O Majesty! thy robes of pomp are pale;
O Strength! thy hand is colder than its mail.
Ambition, Power, Pride, Majesty, we trust
Together. Earth to earth and dust to dust.

French nation. His power was sufficient to check their restlessness, because it was based on their vanity, and his powerful intellect, wherever it turned (and it turned everywhere), called into action innumerable energies which had before been wasted in frivolity and indolence. The memorials of his influence, which remain all over Europe, seem to show us that his power, even if unchecked, would have been based, unlike other tyrannies, on the prosperity of the nation which he governed.

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Yet who dares smile, above his coffin-lid,
At this, the end of all he dreamed and did;
Or o'er the mighty dead, with unmoved eyes
Severely speak or coldly moralise?
Point, for his precept stern, the sage may find
In frequent fates, and masses of mankind;
And reason still from like to like, and trace
The human frailty, as the human face:
Here let him pause, nor use example vain
Of what has been, but shall not be again;
Nor teach the tribes of mortals to condemn
A mightier soul, for what were crime in them;
Nor try, by measure to *his* thoughts confined,
The error of unfathomable mind.
Here let him pause, where rocks of silence hold
The hopes of thousands, in one coffin cold;
And stranger stars, that beamed not on his birth,
Bedew the darkness of the deathful earth.
Ocean! keep calmness on thy bursting brine;—
Lo! here lies hushed a wilder war than thine.
Strengthen thy shackles, Grave! they'll quake to keep
Thy captive's breast from heaving in its sleep.
Cities and nations! join the burial hymn
O'er the cold passion and the lowly limb:
Meet here, ye kings! with reverend steps and slow
Come singing; God hath lifted, and laid low.
And thou! the chosen weapon of His will,
The hope of England once, her glory still,—
Thine is no fame, by dark-eyed slaughter nursed,
Of man lamented, and of God accursed;
Thine was no path of devastating war,
No evil triumph of the blood-stained car;
But thine the high and holy lot, to rear
The sacred olive-branch, where shook the spear;
To bid tumultuous nations rest, and pour
A light of peace o'er each exulting shore.

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And England, pointing to her chiefest pride,
Her guard in battle, and in peace her guide,[1]
Boasts not so much in thee,—and those who stood,
With thee, to sign their bonds of love with blood,—
The victor's forceful hand, and heart of steel,
As the stern patriot's calm and quenchless zeal.
Oh! when, in future days, the minds of men
Shall call dead nations to the field again,
Where, o'er the ghastly wreck of war's array,
Pale Clio points a dark and dreadful way,—
How shall thy memory 'midst her records rise
Soft in its light, though glorious is its guise!
How shall the noblest part of men be stirred
By thy name, in their spirits sepulchred!*
Oh! long as, proudly throned among the free,
Britannia sits upon the silver sea,—
That name shall lighten, like a lordly gem,
Bound in the brightness of her diadem;
Taught by her daughters of the golden hair,
Young lips shall frame it with unconscious care;
Her youthful sons shall start the sound to hear,
Grasp the keen falchion and the glittering spear:
Their voice even age's torpor shall beguile;
Warmed with his thoughts, the grey-haired sire shall smile,
And bless the hero's name, and glory-guarded isle.

[1837–38, age 18–19.]

* *In their spirits sepulchred.*—Καὶ τὸν τάφον ἐπισημότατον, οὐκ ἐν ᾧ κεῖνται μᾶλλον, ἀλλ' ἐν ᾧ ἡ δόξα αὐτῶν . . . ἀείμνηστος καταλείπεται.—*Thucyd.* ii. 43.[2]

[1] ["Lord Melbourne was then Prime Minister, but the Duke of Wellington was looked up to as veteran leader of the Tories, to which party Mr. Ruskin and his father belonged" (*Præterita*, i. ch. i. § 1).—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[2] [From the Funeral Oration of Pericles on the Athenian soldiers who had fallen in the first year of the war, and thereby won "the most illustrious of sepulchres, not that in which they lie buried, but that in which their glory is left behind them in everlasting remembrance."]

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A SCYTHIAN BANQUET SONG[1]

The Scythians, according to Herodotus, made use of part of their enemies' bodies after death for many domestic purposes; particularly of the skull, which they scalped, wrapped in bull's hide, and filled up the cracks with gold; and, having gilded the hide and parts of the bone, used the vessel as a drinking-cup, wreathing it with flowers at feasts.—[*Herod.* iv. 64, 65.]

I

I THINK my soul was childish yet,
  When first it knew my manhood's foe;
But what I was, or where we met,
  I know not—and I shall not know.
But I remember, now, the bed
  On which I waked from such sick slumber
As, after pangs of powerless dread,
Is left upon the limbs, like lead,
  Amidst a calm and quiet number

[1] [First printed in *Friendship's Offering* for 1839, pp. 25–39, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxon." Reprinted in *The English Helicon*, 1841, pp. 276–287; in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 106–120; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 111–126; in the American edition, pp. 41–61. A MS. of it is extant in iA; in this it is called "A Scythian Drinking Song," and one or two minor corrections are made. The various texts agree, except that the indentation of the lines here followed does not occur in *F.O.* or *Poems*, 1850, and except for a few differences of punctuation; also in stanza 1, line 11, *F.O.* misreads "finger" for "fingers."

The poem was written by Ruskin, as appears from letters to W. H. Harrison, in a single day, before March 1838. It is, therefore, placed here early among the poems of that year instead of at the end of them (as in the 1850 volume). Harrison suggested various alterations, but few of them were accepted; see letter on p. 69. Ruskin's father at first considered the poem too horrible; but on second thoughts, convinced perhaps by his son's letter to Harrison, he wrote (June 12, 1838): "I consider it as by far the best of John's doings when I read it carefully. There is a healthy, manly tone about it; a nerve and power and originality that give promise of poetry worth reading—if his health and life be vouchsafed to him; and as to horrors, I will draw you forth from one book of Homer in the beautiful lines of Pope ten times the quantity." The author himself in later years was less indulgent to the piece—"a doggerel in imitation of the 'Giaour'" (see *Stones of Venice*, vol. iii. ch. v., added in 1877, § 2). And cf. *Præterita*, iii. ch. ii. § 25, where Ruskin mentions his habit at one time "of keeping a skull on his chimney-piece and looking at it before he went to sleep."

In the preface to *Friendship's Offering* for 1839 the editor said: "He trusts that he shall not be accused of making an invidious distinction, in publicly expressing his thanks—the only acknowledgment he is permitted to offer—to his anonymous correspondent, the author of 'The Scythian Grave' (*Friendship's Offering*, 1838), who dates from Christ Church, Oxford; for the length of one of whose poetical contributions

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Of corpses, from whose cold decay
Mine infant fingers shrank away;
My brain was wild, my limbs were weak,
And silence swallowed up my shriek—
Eleleu.

II

Alas! my kindred, dark and dead,
Were those from whom I held aloof;
I lay beneath the ruins red
Of what had been my childhood's roof;
And those who quenched its wasted wood,
As morning broke on me, and mine,
Preserved a babe baptized in blood,
And human grief hath been its food,
And human life its wine.
What matter?—those who left me there
Well nerved mine infant limbs to bear
What, heaped upon my haughty head,
I might endure—but did not dread.
Eleleu.

III

A stranger's hand, a stranger's love,
Saved my life and soothed my woe,
And taught my youth its strength to prove,
To wield the lance, and bend the bow.

to this volume, the editor does not deem it necessary to apologise, inasmuch as he feels he should have been guilty of great injustice, to the readers as well as the proprietors of the work, had he neglected to avail himself of the liberality which placed at his disposal 'The Scythian Banquet Song.'" *Cf.* below, p. 101.

In the preface to the volume of 1840, the editor, in making another acknowledgment to an author "whom *Friendship's Offering* has had the honour to introduce to the public," remarked that "The Scythian Banquet Song" "was largely quoted, from last year's volume, by the periodicals of the time." Thus, the *Athenæum* (No. 572, Oct. 13, 1838), in quoting from it at length, said of the poem that "though full of gratuitous blemishes of style and conceits of expression, it is not without merit." The *Literary Gazette* (No. 1134, Oct. 13, 1838) said it had "all the force and spirit of a Byron." The *Torch* (Nov. 1838), in quoting the whole poem, was yet more enthusiastic: "Whether for the easy command and musical mastery of versification, or the haunting spirit of a wild and wailing poetry suited to its subject," it "is certainly a very extraordinary and welcome evidence of a new fountain for the old poetic waters. . . . We confess we are unable to find anything but a very free and rich gushing of poetry."]

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I slew the wolf by Tyres' * shore,
I tracked the pard by chasm and cliff;
Rich were the warrior spoils I wore;
Ye know me well, though now no more
The lance obeys these fingers stiff;
My hand was strong, my hope was high,
All for the glance of one dark eye;
The hand is weak, the heart is chill—
The glance that kindled, colder still.
Eleleu.

IV

By Tyres' banks, like Tyres' wave,
The hours of youth went softly by;
Alas! their silence could not save
My being from an evil eye:
It watched me—little though I knew
The wrath around me rising slow,
Nor deemed my love, like Upas dew,
A plague, that where it settled, slew.
My time approached; I met my foe:
Down with a troop he came by night,†
We fought them by their lances' light;
On lifeless hearth, and guardless gate,
The dawn of day came desolate.
Eleleu.

V

Away, away—a Persian's slave,
I saw my bird of beauty borne,
In wild despair, too weak to save,
Too maddening to mourn.
There dwells a sound within my brain
Of horses' hoof-beat swift and hollow

* Tyres, a river of Scythia, now the Dneister.
† There were frequent incursions made by the Persians upon the Scythians before the grand invasion of Darius.

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Heard, when across the distant plain,
Elaira stretched her arms in vain
To him whose limbs were faint to follow.
The spoiler knew not, when he fled,
The power impending o'er his head;
The strength so few have tameless tried,
That love can give for grief to guide.
Eleleu.

VI

I flung my bow behind my back,
And took a javelin in my hand,
And followed on the fiery track
Their rapine left upon the land.
The desert sun in silence set,
The desert darkness climbed the sky;
I knew that one was waking yet
Whose heart was wild, whose eye was wet,
For me and for my misery;—
One who had left her glance of grief,
Of earthly guides my chosen and chief;
Through thirst and fear, by wave and hill,
That dark eye watched and wooed me still.
Eleleu.

VII

Weary and weak—their traces lost,—
I roved the brazen cities * through,
That Helle's undulating coast
Doth lift beside its billows blue;
Till, in a palace-bordered street,
In the dusk starlight of the day,
A stalkless flower fell near my feet,
Withered and worn, yet passing sweet;
Its root was left—how far away!

* *Brasen cities.*—Brass was a material much used by the Persians in their large edifices. The cities alluded to are those on the south shore of the Hellespont, under Persian Satraps.

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Its leaves were wet—though not with dew;
The breast that kept, the hand that threw,
Were those of one, who sickened more
For the sweet breeze of Tyres' shore.

Eleleu.

VIII

My tale is long. Though bolts of brass
Heed not their captive's faint upbraiding,
They melt like wax, they bend like grass,
At sorrow's touch, when love is aiding;
The night was dim, the stars were dead,
The drifting[1] clouds were grey and wide;
The captive joined me and we fled;
Quivering with joy, though cold with dread,
She shuddered at my side.
We passed the streets—we gained the gate,
Where round the wall its watchers wait;
Our steps beneath were hushed and slow,—
For the third time—I met my foe.

Eleleu.

IX

Swift answering as his anger cried,
Came down the sworded sentinels:
I dashed their closing spears aside;
They thickened,[2] as a torrent swells,
When tempests feed its mountain source:
O'er-matched, borne down, with javelins rent,
I backed them still with fainting force,
Till the life curdled in its course,
And left my madness innocent.
The echo of a maiden's shriek
Mixed with my dreaming long and weak,
And when I woke, the daybreak fell
Into a dark and silent cell.

Eleleu.

[1] [Corrected in the MS. to "drifted."]
[2] [Misprinted "thicken" in the ed. of 1891.]

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X

Know ye the price that must atone,
When power is mocked at by its slave?
Know ye the kind of mercy shown,
When pride condemns, though love would save?
A sullen plash was heard that night
To check the calm of Helle's flow;
And there was much of love and light
Quenched, where the foam-globes[1] moved most white,
With none to save and few to know.
Me they led forth, at dawn of day,
To mock, to torture, and to slay;
They found my courage calm and mild,
Until my foe came near, and smiled.

Eleleu.

XI

He told me how the midnight chasm
Of ocean had been sweetly fed;
He paled—recoiling, for a spasm
Came o'er the limbs they deemed were dead:
The earth grew hot—the sky grew black—
The twisted cords gave way like tow;
I felt the branding fetters crack,
And saw the torturers starting back,
And more I do not know,
Until my stretched limbs dashed their way
Through the cold sea's resulting spray,
And left me where its surges bore
Their voices to a lifeless shore.

Eleleu.

XII

Mine aged eyes are dim and dry;
They have not much to see, or mourn,
Save when, in sleep, pale thoughts pass by—
My heart is with their footsteps worn

[1] [A favourite expression with Ruskin; see "Last Song of Arion," st. ix., and "Source of the Arveron," below, pp. 119, 387, and *cf.* Vol. I. pp. 37, 506, and *Modern Painters*, vol. i. pt. ii. sec. iv. ch. i. § 2.]

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Into a pathway. Swift and steep
  Their troops pass down it—and I feel not—
Though they have words would make me weep
If I could tell their meaning deep—
  But *I* forget—and *they* reveal not:
Oh, lost Elaira!—when I go
Where cold hands hold the soundless bow,
Shall the black earth, all pitiless,
  Forget the early grave
Of her, whom beauty did not bless,
  Affection could not save?

Eleleu.

XIII

Oh, lost Elaira! long for thee
  Sweet Tyres' banks have blushed in vain;
And blight to them, and death to me
  Shall break the link of memory's chain.
My spirit keeps its lonely lair
  In mouldering life to burn and blacken:
The throbs that moved it once are there
Like winds that stir a dead man's hair,
  Unable to awaken.
Thy soul on earth supremely smiled,
In beauty bright, in mercy mild;
It looked to love—it breathed to bless—
It died, and left me—merciless.

Eleleu.

XIV

And men shrink from me, with no sense
  That the fierce heart they fear and fly,
Is one whose only evidence
  Of beating is in agony.
They know, with me, to match or melt,
  The sword or prayer alike are vain:
The spirit's presence, half unfelt,

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Hath left,—slow withering where it dwelt,
One precedence of pain.
All that my victims feel or fear
Is well avenged by something here;
And every curse they breathe on me
Joins in the deep voice of the sea.

Eleleu.

XV

It rolls—it coils—it foams—it flashes,
Pale and putrid—ghastly green;
Lit with light of dead men's ashes
Flickering through the black weed's screen.
Oh! there, along the breathless land,
Elaira keeps her couch allotted;
The waters wave her weary hand,
And toss pale shells and ropy sand
About her dark hair clasped and clotted.
The purple isles are bright above
The frail and moon-blanched bones of love;
Their citron breeze is full of bliss—
Her lips are cool without its kiss.

Eleleu.

XVI

My thoughts are wandering and weak;
Forgive an old man's dotard dreaming;
I know not, sometimes when I speak,
Such visions as have quiet seeming.
I told you how my madness bore
My limbs from torture. When I woke,
I do remember something more
Of wandering on the wet sea-shore,
By waving weed and withered rock,
Calling Elaira, till the name
Crossed o'er the waters as they came—
Mildly—to hallow and to bless
Even what had made it meaningless.

Eleleu.

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XVII

The waves, in answering murmurs mixed,
  Tossed a frail fetter on the sand:
Too well I knew whose fingers fixed,
  Whose arm had lost, the golden band:
For such it was, as still confines
  Faint beauty's arm, who will not listen
The words of love, that mockery twines
To soothe the soul that pants and pines
  Within its rose-encumbered prison.
The waters freed her; she who wore
Fetter or armlet needs no more:
Could the waves tell, who saw me lift,
For whom I kept, their glittering gift?
  Eleleu.

XVIII

Slow drifts the hour when Patience waits
  Revenge's answering orison;
But—one by one, the darkening fates
  Will draw the balanced axle on,
Till torture pays the price of pride,
  And watches wave, with sullen shine,
The sword of sorrow, justified.
The long years kept their quiet glide,
  His hour was past: they brought me mine;
When, steed to steed, and rank to rank,
With matchèd numbers fierce and frank,
(The war-wolves waiting near to see
Our battle bright) my Foe met Me.
  Ha—Hurra!

XIX[1]

As the tiger tears through the jungle reeds,
  As the west wind breaks through the sharp corn-ears,

[1] ["You will notice," wrote the author to W. H. Harrison, "the measure changing in the nineteenth stanza, and jingling a little after that in dactyls. You will see the reason of this change; at first to give the gallop, and then to keep the steam up, and I hope you will think it allowable."]

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As the quick death follows where the lightning leads,
  Did my dark horse bear through the bended spears;
And the blood came up to my brain like a mist,
  With a dark delight and a fiery feel;
For the black darts hailed, and the javelins hissed,
To the corpses clasped in their tortured twist,
  From mine arms like rain from the red-hot steel.
Well went the wild horses—well rode their lords—
Wide waved the sea of their circling swords;
But down went the wild steeds—down went the sea—
Down went the dark banners,—down went He.
  Ha—Hurra!

XX

For, forward fixed, my phrenzy rushed
  To one pale plume of fitful wave;
With failing strength, o'er corses crushed,
  My horse obeyed the spurs I gave.
Slow rolled the tide of battle by,
  And left me on the field alone;
Save that a goodly company
Lay gazing on the bright blue sky,
  All as stiff as stone.
And the howling wolves came, merry and thick,
The flesh to tear and the bones to pick:
I left his carcass, a headless prize,[1]
To these priests of mine anger's sacrifice.
  Ha—Hurra!

XXI

Hungry they came, though at first they fled
  From the grizzly look of a stranger guest—
From a horse with its hoof on a dead man's head,
  And a soldier who leaned on a lance in his breast.
The night wind's voice was hoarse and deep,
  But there were thoughts within me rougher,

[1] [An emendation introduced to meet W. H. Harrison's criticism; see p. 70. It appears that the line originally ended "legs, arms and thighs,"—"poetry for the shambles," as his father called it.]

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When my foiled passion could not keep
His eyes from settling into sleep
  That could not see, nor suffer.
He knew his spirit was delivered
By the last nerve my sword had severed,
And lay—his death pang scarcely done,
Stretched at my mercy—asking none.
  Eleleu.

XXII

His lips were pale. They once had worn
  A fiercer paleness. For a while,
Their gashes kept the curl of scorn,
  But now—they always smile.
A life, like that of smouldering ashes,
  Had kept his shadowy eyeballs burning.
Full through the neck my sabre crashes—
The black blood burst beneath their lashes
  In the strained sickness of their turning.
By my bridle-rein did I hang the head,
And I spurred my horse through the quick and dead,
Till his hoofs and his hair dropped thick and fresh
From the black morass of gore and flesh.
  Ha—Hurra!

XXIII

My foe had left me little gold
  To mock the stolen food of the grave,
Except one circlet: I have told
  The arm that lost, the surge that gave.
Flexile it was, of fairest twist:
  Pressing its sun-like woven line,
A careless counter had not missed
One pulse along a maiden's wrist,
  So softly did the clasp confine.
This—molten till it flowed as free
As daybreak on the Egean sea,
He who once clasped—for Love to sever
And death to lose, received,—for ever.

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XXIV

I poured it round the wrinkled brow,
Till hissed its cold, corrupted skin;
Through sinuous nerves the fiery flow
Sucked and seared the brain within.
The brittle bones were well annealed,
A bull's hide bound the goblet grim,
Which backwards bended, and revealed
The dark eye sealed—the set lips peeled:
Look here! how I have pardoned him.
They call it glorious to forgive;
'Tis dangerous, among those that live,
But the dead are daggerless and mild,
And my foe smiles on me—like a child.

XXV

Fill me the wine! for daylight fades,
The evening mists fall cold and blue;
My soul is crossed with lonelier shades,
My brow is damp with darker dew;
The earth hath nothing but its bed
Left more for me to seek, or shun;
My rage is past—my vengeance fed—
The grass is wet with what I've shed,
The air is dark with what I've done;
And the grey mound that I have built
Of intermingled grief and guilt,
Sits on my breast with sterner seat
Than my old heart can bear, and beat.
Eleleu.

XXVI

Fill wine! These fleshless jaws are dry
And gurgle with the crimson breath;
Fill me the wine! for such as I
Are meet, methinks, to drink with death.

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Give me the roses! They shall weave
  One crown for me, and one for him,
Fresher than his compeers receive,
Who slumber where the white worms leave
  Their tracks of slime on cheek and limb.
Kiss me, mine enemy! Lo! how it slips,
The rich red wine through his skeleton lips;
His eye-holes glitter,—his loose teeth shake,
But their words are all drowsy—and will not awake.

XXVII

That lifeless gaze is fixed on me;
  Those lips would hail a bounden brother;
We sit in love, and smile to see
  The things that we have made each other.
The wreaking of our wrath has reft
  Our souls of all that loved or lightened:
He knows the heart his hand has left,
He sees its calm and closeless cleft,
  And *I*—the bones my vengeance whitened.
Kiss me, mine enemy! Fill thee with wine!
Be the flush of thy revelling mingled with mine;
Since the hate and the horror we drew with our breath
Are lost in forgiveness, and darkened in death.

[The following letter from Ruskin to W. H. Harrison was sent in answer to sundry criticisms, and explains the author's idea in writing the poem:—

CHRIST CHURCH, 1*st August* [1838].

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been looking over your very just animadversions on the "Drinking Song," which I have just received from my father. It is, I am quite willing to allow, a very disagreeable poem wherewith to fill up the pauses of a party *before* dinner, and I think your opinion very just that the kind of thing is not adapted for an elegant volume like *Friendship's Offering*; but young ladies never go into hysterics about matters that don't concern themselves, and gentlemen who had let the brandy bottle alone before the drinking song would not be under the necessity of having recourse to it afterwards. Besides, I have sugared it all up to the ninth or tenth stanza in a style that would do for the *Ladies' Magazine*, and all the emotions excited by anything in the latter part would go off in a drawing-room in a few "La! how horrids!" and "Only thinks!" Besides, I think I can prove to you that the poem would be spoiled were it one whit less disgusting: first—by-the-bye, I am sorry the eleventh stanza is so obscure—the man is told of the death of

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Elaira when he is just bound for the torture, a sudden spasm of madness comes over him when he hears it, and the nervous strength of madness instantly crashes the fetters, snaps the cords, the torturers start out of the way of the liberated madman, and away he goes—he doesn't know where, until the paroxysm passes away, etc., etc. For the rest of the horror, there is quite the same thing, and to the same degree, in "The Scythian Grave"; but there it is in its right place, here it is in the midst of mocking revelry; there it is regarded by another person of common feelings, who is serious and sorrowful in his contemplation, and with whom we can sympathise: here it is regarded by one of those who instituted and kept up the customs, with whom we can have no sympathy. Can we expect that a fellow accustomed to drink out of skulls, to make gloves out of human skins, to dine with his relations when they had been forty days dead, should be soft or delicate in his expressions? Not only has he been brought up in the school of Scythian horror, but in a far severer one—that of his own agony. He is in the state, which you do not seem to have observed, in which the strong spirit, writhing in its own pangs, stretches itself out, as it were, into mockery, or laughter, or cruelty, as the spasm of the moment prompts; delighting partly in infliction of pain, to take away its own supremacy of suffering; partly in mocking at inflicted pain, which it feels to be futile and paltry compared with its own; partly in piercing itself with strong sensation of any kind, to take away the numbness of its enduring grief.[1] Do we expect a man in this state to be mincing in his expressions? Would he not rather apparently mock at everything fearful in life or death, pausing from time to time in the forced energy, and sinking back into the original softness of feeling, which I intend this man to have possessed in no ordinary degree, as he does in the two stanzas—"Oh, lost Elaira!" [xiii.] and the latter one, "Fill me the wine! for daylight fades" [xxv.]? The whole force and character and plan of the poem depends upon the contrast between the bursts of original feeling and the glow of tortured phrensy, excited by sorrow, directed by education. I know it is horrible; it ought to be so—the man is seeking for something more horrible than his own thoughts. I am glad it makes you shudder; I worked it up on purpose, till I had almost sickened myself, and then I was satisfied. It is altogether Scythian—the Scythians wouldn't do for society in these days, but if I bring them forward at all they must be true Scythians.

With regard to the skeleton lips—I do not mean the lips of a skeleton. They did not tear the flesh off, but seared it with the gold, and let it dry. It is very difficult to get a skull with the lower jaw on, but when it has, its grin is most edifying, and has the effect if not the substance of lips.

Your notice of "thighs" is quite true; if it were to be printed I should substitute "I left his carcase a headless prize." But even if I wished to alter the poem I have not time now, and as it is it will not do for *F.O.* I have promised my tutors to give all my time to University studies, and shall not get into the King Cambyses vein again if I can help it. Present my compliments to Mrs. Harrison, and believe me to remain, my dear sir, very truly yours,

J. Ruskin.

Should the *gentle* Muse pay me a visit, you may depend upon having the result. But I *cannot* alter.

W. H. Harrison, Esq.]

[1] [*Cf.* some expressions used by Ruskin of his own feelings in the verses, "A Moment's Falter," on p. 465.]

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THE RECREANT[1]

In an attack of the Athenians upon the Æginetæ, the former were cut off, with the exception of one man, who went home to tell the tale. He was met in the street of the city by a group of Athenian women, each of whom, enquiring where he had left her husband, wounded him with the clasp of her robe until he died.—HERODOTUS, *Terpsichore* [Book v.], ch. 87.

WITH the hills of their fathers around them,
The heaven of their country above,
They stood in the strength of their manhood,
They went in the light of our love.
In the pride of their power they departed,
Down by the path of the sea;
Dark eyes of the desolate-hearted
Were watching for them and for thee!

Who comes from the banquet of blood,
Where the guests are as still as a stone?
Who dares to return by the road,
Where the steps of his joy are *alone?*
They were bound by the oath of the free,
They were true as the steel that they bare;
They were true to themselves and to thee,
Behold! *thou* hast left them—and where?

Oh! well has their triumph been told,
In the time of its terrible crowning;
Poor recreant! kingly, though cold,
Is the sleep that thou durst not lie down in.

[1] [First published in *The Amaranth*, 1839, pp. 56–57, signed "J. R." Quoted *in extenso* in a review in the *Times* (Nov. 2, 1838), with the remark that "although careless in some parts, and in other passages most difficult of comprehension, it contains some very fine lines." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 67–68; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 85–86. No MS. is extant. In writing the poem Ruskin had forgotten the details and source of the story, which were found for him by his father, and some alterations had to be introduced in the text. In sending them to W. H. Harrison, he says, "I am glad it is another illustration of Herodotus—fine old fellow!" The weapon with which the Athenian women attacked the recreant was a pin with a long sharp point like a stiletto: specimens in gold may be seen in the Room of Gold Ornaments at the British Museum.]

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The swords of the restless are rusted
In the rest that thou shrankest to share;
False helot! to whom hast thou trusted
The pride of the peaceful—and where?

For thee, who wast not of the number
That sank in the red battle shade,
Thy name shall be cursed in the slumber
Of the life that thy baseness betrayed.
The strength of the tremorless tread
Of our bravest, our love can resign;
But tears, as of blood, shall be shed
For the dastard returning of thine.

But what! when thy soul hath not hearkened
To the charge of our love or our fear,
Shall the soft eyes of Hellas be darkened
By the thought of thy birth or thy bier?
The strength of thy shame shall requite thee;
The souls of the lost shall not see
Mother nor maid of the mighty
Shed a tear for a dastard like thee.

[Age 19.]

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THE WRECK[1]

Its masts of might, its sails so free,
Had borne the scatheless keel
Through many a day of darkened sea,
And many a storm of steel;
When all the winds were calm, it met
(With home-returning prore)
With the lull
Of the waves
On a low lee shore.

The crest of the conqueror
On many a brow was bright;
The dew of many an exile's eye
Had dimmed the dancing sight;
And for love and for victory,
One welcome was in store,
In the lull
Of the waves
On a low lee shore.

The voices of the night are mute
Beneath the moon's eclipse;
The silence of the fitful flute
Is on the dying lips.
The silence of my lonely heart
Is kept for evermore
In the lull
Of the waves
On a low lee shore.

[Age 19.]

[1] [First published in *The Amaranth*, 1839, p. 90, signed "J. R." To this Annual, Ruskin was a fellow-contributor with his former tutor, the Rev. T. Dale, who sent a religious poem entitled "Lament of a Bereaved Husband." "The Wreck" was reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 69–70; *John Ruskin, a Bibliographical Biography*, by W. E. A. Axon, 1879, p. 5 (2nd ed. 1881, p. 7); *Papers of the Manchester Literary Club*, vol. v., 1879, p. 157; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 87–88. No MS. is extant.]

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ARISTODEMUS AT PLATÆA [1]

Of two Spartans who were prevented by illness from taking part in the battle of Thermopylæ, and who were, in consequence, degraded to the level of Helots, one, unable to endure the scorn of his countrymen, killed himself; the other, by name Aristodemus, waited, and when, at the battle of Platæa, thirty-three thousand allied Greeks stood to receive the final and desperate attack of three hundred thousand chosen Asiatics, and the Spartans, unused to Persian arms, hung slightly back, he charged alone, calling to his countrymen to "follow the coward,"—broke the enemy's mass,—and was found, when the victorious Greeks who followed him had laid two hundred thousand of their enemy dead on the field, lying on a low hillock, with his face turned up to heaven,—a group of the Persian nobles slaughtered around him. He was refused the honours of burial, because, it was said, he was only courageous in despair.

I

Ye have darkened mine honour, and branded my name;
Ye have quenched its remembrance in silence and shame;
Yet the heart ye called craven, unbroken, hath borne
The voice of your anger,—the glance of your scorn.

II

But the life that hath lingered is now in mine hand;*
My waiting was but for a lot of the land,
Which His measure, who ruleth the battle array,
May mete for your best and your bravest to-day.

III

My kinsmen,—my brothers,—your phalanx is fair;
There's a shield, as I think, that should surely be there;
Ye have darkened its disk, and its hour hath drawn near,
To be reared as a trophy, or borne as a bier.†

* 1 Sam. xxviii. 21; Job, xiii. 14.

† If his body were obtained by the enemy, it would be reared as a trophy; if recovered by his friends, borne as a bier; unless, as he immediately called to mind, they should deny him funeral honours.

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1839, pp. 140–142, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxon." The word "lying" was repeated before "slaughtered" in *F.O.*, and stanza iv. line 1 was thus printed: "What said I? Alas, though the foe in his flight." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 71–73, where stanza iv. line 1 runs, "What, said I, alas! though the foe in his flight." In *F.O.* the stanzas were not numbered. In the American edition, pp. 21–23; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 89–91. "Third (or rather fourth) of the Herodotean poems: the story is told in Herodotus, vii. 229–231, and ix. 71."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. No MS. is extant.]

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IV

What, said I, alas! though the foe in his flight
Should quit me, unspoiled, on the field of the fight,
Ye will leave me to lie, with no hand to inurn,
For the dog to devour, or the stranger to spurn!

V

What matter? Attendants my slumber shall grace,
With blood on the breast, and with fear on the face;
And Sparta may own that the death hath atoned
For the crime of the cursèd, whose life she disowned.

VI

By the banks of Eurotas her maidens shall meet,
And her mountains rejoice in the fall of your feet;
And the cry of your conquest be lofty and loud,
O'er the lengthened array of the shield,—or the shroud.

VII

And the fires of the grave shall empurple the air,
When they lick the white dust of the bones ye shall bear;
The priest and the people, at altar and shrine,
Shall worship their manes, disdainful of mine.

VIII

Yet say that *they* fought for the hopes of their breast,—
For the hearts that had loved them,—the lips that had blessed;
For the roofs that had covered,—the country that claimed,
The sires that had named them,—the sons they had named.

IX

And say that *I* fought for the land of the free,
Though its bosom of blessing beat coldly for me;
For the lips that had cursed me,—the hearts that had scorned,
And the desolate hope of the death unadorned.

[Age 19.]

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SONG[1]

I

We care not what skies are the clearest,
What scenes are the fairest of all;
The skies and the scenes that are dearest
For ever, are those that recall
To the thoughts of the hopelessly-hearted
The light of the dreams that deride,
With the form of the dear and departed,
Their loneliness weary and wide.

II

The beauty of earth or of ocean
Dies darkly, and withered away,
If they rouse no remembered emotion
By the light of their lifeless array;
By the thoughts which we cannot dissever
From the place where their loveliness rose,
Is the unbroken seal set for ever
On the place of their passioned repose.

III

Thou knowest—sweet shade of my spirit!
That the changes of time or of scene
May mock me—but none disinherit
Remembrance of that which has been;

[1] [First printed in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. No. 6, January 1839, p. 486, signed "J. R." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 87–88; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 92–93. "Probably written before Aug. 1838, as one of the later poems to Adèle in her absence (Feb. 1836–Aug. 1838), along with 'Though thou hast not a feeling for one' (p. 78), and 'Memory' (p. 80)."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. No MS. is extant.]

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With the July wind's Indian story
  Come dreams of the winter-scathed tree;
With the flush of Creation's high glory,
  Of the place that was hallowed by thee.

IV

Though it now may be dark and deserted,
  It hath thoughts that I cannot resign;
My glance is not vainly reverted
  To the spot that was lightened by thine;
Remember—whate'er thou hast taken,
  Thou hast left me a throb and a thrill;
And the heart which it seemed was forsaken
  Is round thee, and dwells with thee still.

[Age 19.]

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SONG[1]

I

THOUGH thou hast not a feeling for one
Who is torn by too many for thee;
Yet oh! not entirely unknown
To thy heart can the agony be
Of him whom thou leftest alone
By the green and cold surge of the sea.

II

Thine eye may gleam bright through thy tresses,—
It hath not a grief to deplore;—
Thy lips, in their speaking caresses,
May be lovely and light as of yore:—
None love them as he did, who blesses
Their motion and music no more.

III

Oh! ask of the thoughts that illume
Thy heart in the hour of its pride,—
Though the flush of thy beauty may bloom
Where the throne of its worship is wide,—
Who loves it, as he did, to whom
Alone it is ever denied!

IV

The thoughts, to whose sceptre resistance
Is mockery,—compass their slave;
Not even from that desolate distance,
Beyond the wild depth of the wave,
Can the presence that gave them existence,
Departed—bequeath them a grave.

[Age 19.]

[1] [First printed with the preceding lines in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. No. 6, January 1839, p. 491, signed "J. R." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 89–90; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 94–95. No MS. is extant.]

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HORACE:—"ITER AD BRUNDUSIUM"[1]

THE gust sung soft and well, as if to keep
My wakening lulled—although it banished sleep;
From sluggish waters, in the moonlit marsh,
The midnight reptiles' cry came low and harsh;
Beneath my window, where the turf was kind,
A weary traveller on his cloak reclined;
Sought the sweet rest his fevered dream denied,
Stirred, as in fear, or as in sorrow sighed;
My muleteer, slow pacing, drove his team
Up to a lilied meadow, which a stream
Kept verdant,—where a myrtle thicket grew,
Shading its softness from the damp, cold dew;
(Through the close leaves entangled starlight fell
On twining rose and orient asphodel;)
And, as he urged the lingering mules along,
Cheered and beguiled his moonlit way with song;—
Singing the glancing eye and glossy shade
Of the dark tresses of his mountain maid:
Remembering how, upon their parting day,
She turned her sad and soul-like eyes away;
Yet left their look, to bind him with its spell,
When her lips trembled in the faint Farewell!

[Age 19.]

[1] [First printed with the preceding poems in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. No. 6, January 1839, p. 500, signed "J. R." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, p. 91; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 96. A loose paraphrase of Horace, *Satires*, i. v., lines 13–24. In the Ruskin Exhibition at Coniston (1900) the "pocket Horace carried abroad in his youth" was shown (No. 311 in the catalogue). At a later time Ruskin characterised the "Iter Brundisianum" as the "most disgusting of all so-called poems" (*Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, § 78). But for many aspects of Horace's genius he learnt to entertain a deep respect (see *e.g. Præterita*, iii. ch. i. § 19; *Bibliotheca Pastorum*, i. (preface); *Val d'Arno*, § 220; *Queen of the Air*, § 47. No MS. is extant.]

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MEMORY[1]

THE Summer wind is soft and kind
  The midnight leaves among,
And perfumed power, by wind[2] and flower,
  Is on its wild wings flung;
And harp-like notes of music meet
Its viewless hand and whispering feet.

Oh! memory, like that breeze of night,
  Can soothe a darker gloom,
And, from the flowers of lost delight,
  Awake the weak perfume.
Faint, sad, and sweet the echoes call
In answer to her footstep's fall.

But Winter's breath is chill as death,
  And hushed his lifeless sky;
Though on the ground comes saddening sound
  Of leaves that dancing die;
And all the earth that heaven looks on
Is widely waste, and weakly wan.

But Winter comes not o'er the heart,
  Where memory doth not die;
There is much sorrow in her smile,
  More soothing in her sigh;
And her deep glance is bright with rays,—
The light of long departed days.

[Age 19.]

[1] [First published in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. No. 7, February 1839, p. 536, signed "J. R." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 92–93; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 97. For the date, see note on p. 76. In a letter to W. H. Harrison, referring to these lines, the author says, "The summer and winter thing was put in for the sake of the dancing leaves, which *I* think *very* fine." So, we may opine, did Mr. Harrison; for to line 377 of "The Gipsies"—"The sere leaves in their Autumn dance of death"—he appended the note, "very clever and original." The MS. is in Book viii.]

[2] [So in the printed texts; but the MS. has "mead," which is probably the word intended by the author.]

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THE NAME[1]

I

He was a strange, yet gentle youth,
The meaning of whose mind was made
Half of vision, half of truth;
The dream a sun—the truth a shade;
But, of the strange and fitful flame
That once aroused his fiery frame
To thought or passion—work—or will,
This only is remembered still:
He loved a name.

II

He loved a name. Perchance he found
Its syllables were sweet of sound;
Or called at once on ear and eye,
The thrill of a lost memory;
Or o'er the heart, that no one knew,
Came like the south wind, dropping dew,
To mock its early hope and hue.
Some called the name—and, saying, smiled.
A name of nothing. But it seemed
That, like a night-bewildered child
Awaked from fancies wan and wild,
He pined for what he dreamed.

III

He loved a name: and frequent wept
To hear a careless lip expressing
The love that, like an echo, slept

[1] [First published with the preceding poem in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. No. 7, February 1839, pp. 558–559, signed "J. R." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 94–96; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 99–101. *Cf.* "Evening in Company" (p. 461), and "'Twas but a moment's falter" (p. 465). No MS. is extant.]

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In chasms of his soul, and kept
It full of visionary blessing.
Alas! that any dared to claim
Possession of the secret name,
Or violate, with stranger-tone,
The sound he fancied all his own.

IV

He loved it—as grief loves the tomb,
That is her memory's bourne and bower.
He feared the lips of those to whom
He dared not own its passioned power.
Their breath came like the dead Simoom
Across the beauty and the bloom
Of his unfading flower.
Yet would he oft, with secret tone,
Breathe it to himself alone,
O'er and o'er, and smile—and yet
His lip was pale, his eye was wet;
Perchance because he could not see
The sound of its sweet company.
Poor fool! at last he met it, where
It left him darkness and despair;
Even graved on the pavement pale
Of a long and lone cathedral aisle,
On a flat, cold slab of narrow stone,
With the damp and the dimness of earth thereon;
Worn by the foot—scorned by the eye,
Of the calm and careless passer-by.
It was sculptured clear on the marble grey,
Under a star of the tinted light;
His weeping was wild that dreary day,—
His sleeping was sound that night.

[Age 19.]

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CANZONET[1]

I

THE winter's chill hath charmed the wave,
The wasted leaves have left the bough,
The pale stars give the light they gave
When thou wast—where thou art not now.
Oh! as the frail and lonely lute,
Whose chords are cold, whose music mute,
This heart is left alone by thee,
Who wert its only melody.

II

Oh! say with whom shall now be spent
The hours that once were spent with thee?
Whose every pause is eloquent
Of what has been and cannot be:
A form is near me—known, how well!—
A voice is round me like a spell.
Thou comest—it mocks me. Vision vain!
Thou wilt not, shalt not, come again.

III

Canst thou yet come to fill this heart
With the same voice, and mood, and mien?
Oh! if to know what now thou art,
Were to forget what thou hast been,
The soul that loved thee must be chill
And changed, if it could love thee still.
Oh! darkly would it dread to deem
What once was memory—now a dream.

[1] [First published in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. No. 8, March 1839, p. 604, signed "J. R." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 97–98; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 102–103. There is no MS. extant. Probably written in December 1838, in anticipation of Mdlle. Domecq's second visit to Herne Hill (see *Præterita*, i. ch. xii. § 256).]

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IV

I would not that these hours were spent
  Even with thyself—if not the same;
If to be true to her who went,
  Were to be false to her who came.
Deep in this heart's most silent place
Their gentle path those hours shall trace.
Think'st thou an hour can ever be
Spent there, and yet not spent with thee?

[Age 19.]

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FRAGMENT FROM A METEOROLOGICAL JOURNAL[1]

Six days the mist was breathed into the sky,
From the pale lips of the earth—most silently.
It was a cheerful mist—and the young Frost
Played strangely in the Star-light, which, half lost,
Crept in white cords among the icy hair
Of the faint Midnight; while the moveless air,
Fashioned, with fingers fine, the gathering slow
Of frost-work clear—and wreaths of swan-like snow.
The mist was full of voices musical—
The laugh of merry children—the shrill call
Of the slow plough-boy from the furrows brown—
Tinkling of bells upon the breezy down,
Where following sheep tread bleating, and the cry
Of shepherd dogs, that bark for company—
And song of winter birds, that still repeat
The notes which desolation makes so sweet.
But on the seventh day there came a wind
From the far south, whose voice was low, and kind;
And the mist felt its feet tread where they went—
Yielding before them—all obedient—
And by their passing, a slow chasm was riven
In the grey clouds—and the deep silent heaven
Gazed down in the pure essence of its love—
Kindling the earth with blessing from above,
Yet sad—exceeding sad;—and one lone star,
Tearful and pale—as hopes of sorrow are—

[1] [First published with the preceding poem in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. No. 8, March 1839, p. 624, signed "J. R." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 99–100; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 104–105. No MS. is extant.]

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Far in the west, seemed smiling as it sate,
As one, whose mourning is left desolate,
Doth smile at consolation.
Thus it is
That we would gladden with forgetfulness
The heart—whose memory maddens us—and weave
A mist of thoughts and voices which may leave
Nothing that once was rosy wreathed joy,
To pale and wither into agony.
Yet evermore—its beauty veiled in vain—
The past—the lost, the loved—looks forth again.
Oh! happier far to hail the grief that keeps
The thoughts that Memory blesses, as she weeps,
Yet feebly, softly smiles, to see, to know
Her unforgotten joy—her hope of long ago.

[Age 19.]

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CANZONET[1]

I

THERE's a change in the green of the leaf,
And a change in the strength of the tree;
There's a change in our gladness or grief,—
There may be a change upon thee.
But love—long bereft of thee,
Hath a shade left of thee;
Swift and pale hours may float
Past—but it changeth not.

II

As a thought in a consecrate book,
As a tint in the silence of air,
As the dream in the depths of the brook,
Thou art there.
When we two meet again,
Be it in joy or pain,
Which shall the fairest be,—
Thou—or thy memory?

[Age 19.]

[1] [First published with the preceding poems in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. No. 8, March 1839, p. 635, signed "J. R." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, p. 101; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 106. No MS. is extant. Perhaps written December 1838; see note on p. 33.]

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SONG OF THE TYROLESE AFTER THE BATTLE OF BRIXEN * [1]

Oh, the pause of silent dread
After rush of battles holy!
Lo, the spirits of the dead
From the field are floating slowly;
Dense the mist reeks full of life
From the blood-hot place of strife,
Where our noblest, bravest, lie so lowly.
But there's pride in the gasp of our conquerors' breath,
Though their laurels be wreathed by the fingers of Death;
There's a smile on the lip that is ceasing to quiver,
And a flash in the eye that is freezing for ever.

Beneath the sacred sod they lie on
Lay we our triumphant brave;
This land they loved to live and die on,
And o'er their honourable grave
Shall blossoms burst of brilliant hue,
And softly shall distil the dew,
And mountain pines umbrageous darkly wave;

* In which Hofer obtained a complete victory.

[1] [First published in *The London Monthly Miscellany*, vol. i. No. 9, April 1839, p. 39, unsigned. Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 104–105; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 109–110. In the *Poems*, 1850, there are two small misprints which were corrected in the ed. of 1891: in line 2, "battle's" for "battles"; in line 8, "conqueror's" for "conquerors'." No MS. is extant. Ruskin had been in Tyrol in 1835, and was doubtless interested in Andreas Hofer, the Tyrolese patriot (1767–1810), from seeing the monument to him in Innsbruck Cathedral. In 1838 a monument to the Tyrolese who fell in defence of their fatherland had been added. It will be remembered that Wordsworth wrote some pieces in 1809 in honour of Hofer and the Tyrolese.]

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The stars shall look down from the heaven most brightly,
Where the bones of the brave are, the moon will watch
nightly;
Like the Alp that is reddest at set of the sun,
Brightest in death is the glory they've won;
Our shouting the hymn at their burial shall be—
Oh! a soldier sleeps well in a land that is free.

[Age 19.]

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1839[1]

SALSETTE AND ELEPHANTA[2]

A PRIZE POEM

"... Religio, pedibus subjecta, vicissim
Obteritur, nos exæquat victoria cœlo."—LUCRETIUS [i. 79, 80].

'Tis eve—and o'er the face of parting day
Quick smiles of summer lightning flit and play;
In pulses of broad light, less seen than felt,
They mix in heaven, and on the mountains melt;

[1] [In January 1839 Ruskin went up to Oxford, and at last won the Newdigate with this prize poem. He also sent to W. H. Harrison in January a portion of "The Broken Chain" (see below, p. 124 *n*). Two other pieces of the year were further studies in Herodotus—"The Scythian Guest" and "The Last Song of Arion." The verses, "To Adèle," were also written in this year. His summer tour had been to the west of England, and he had afterwards read with one of his Oxford tutors (Osborne Gordon) at Herne Hill.]

[2] [The Newdigate Prize Poem, 1839; written, therefore, before March 31 in that year. For particulars of the recitation in the theatre, etc., see above, p. xxvi. In the 1850 volume it is placed among the poems of 1838, as written when Ruskin was nineteen (*i.e.* before Feb. 8, 1839), but probably, like the other prize poems, it was not finished till the last. First published in pamphlet form, with the following title-page:—

Salsette and Elephanta: | A prize poem, | Recited in the Theatre, Oxford; | June 12, 1839. | By | John Ruskin, | Christ Church. | [*Arms of Oxford*] | Oxford: | Printed and published by J. Vincent. | MDCCCXXXIX.

This pamphlet was issued in drab or blue paper wrappers (ed. 1). Reprinted in *Oxford Prize Poems, being a Collection of such English Poems as have at various times obtained prizes in the University of Oxford*, Oxford, 1839 (ed. 2). Ruskin's poem is the last in the volume (pp. 357–371), and is not included in the table of contents, which had presumably been printed off before the result of the competition for 1839 was known. The omission in the contents was not corrected in a further collection of Prize Poems, issued in 1846, wherein "Salsette and Elephanta" again appeared, pp. 357–371 (ed. 2*a*). "I made my first literary bargain," wrote the author's father to W. H. Harrison at the time, "by selling the 265 lines to an Oxford bookseller for £20." He adds that there were "sixty or seventy competitors." In the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 74–86 (ed. 3); in pamphlet form, separately, by George Allen, 1879, a second edition of ed. 1 (ed. 4); in the American *Poems*, 1882, pp. 24–40 (ed. 5); in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 129–141 (ed. 6). The lines are here numbered for reference. No MS. is extant. The best modern account of the cave-temples described in this poem is *The Rock Temples of Elephanta or Ghârâpurî*, by James Burgess (Bombay, 1871): it is illustrated by photographs.]

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Their silent transport fills the exulting air—
'Tis eve, and where is evening half so fair?
Oh! deeply, softly sobs the Indian sea
O'er thy dark sands, majestic Dharavee,*
When, from each purple hill and polished lake,
The answering voices of the night awake
The fitful note of many a brilliant bird,—
The lizard's plunge, o'er distant waters heard,—
The thrill of forest leaves—how soft, how swift!
That floats and follows where the night-winds drift;
Or, piercing through the calmness of the sky,
The jungle tiger's sharp and sudden cry.
Yet all is peace, for these weak voices tell
How deep the calm they break but not dispel.
The twilight heaven rolls on, like some deep stream
When breezes break not on its moving dream;
Its trembling stars continual watches keep,
And pause above Canarah's haunted steep; †
Each in its path of first ascension hid
Behind the height of that pale pyramid,—
(The strength of nations hewed the basalt spire, ‡
And barbed its rocks like sacrificial fire.)
Know they the hour's approach, whose fateful flight
Was watched of yore from yonder cloudless height?
Lone on its utmost peak, the Prophet Priest
Beheld the night unfolded from the East;
In prescient awe perused its blazing scroll,
And read the records stretched from Pole to Pole.
And though their eyes are dark, their lips are still,
Who watched and worshipped on Canarah's hill,
Wild superstition's visionary power
Still rules and fills the spirit of the hour:

* The southern promontory of the island of Salsette.

† The central peak of Salsette.

‡ M. Anguetil du Perron,[1] in his accounts of Canarah, says that its peak appears to have been hewn to a point by human art as an emblem of the solar ray.

[1] [So spelt in all the texts. The author referred to is A. H. Anquetil du Perron (*Recherches historiques et chronologiques sur l'Inde*, 1791).]

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The Indian maiden, through the scented grove,
Seeks the dim shore, and lights the lamp of love;
The pious peasant, awe-struck and alone,
With radiant garland crowns the purple stone,*
And shrinks, returning through the starlit glade,
When breezes stir the peepul's sacred shade; †
For well his spirit knows the deep appeal
That love must mourn to miss, yet fear to feel;
Low sounds, faint rays, upon the senses shed—
The voices of the lost, the dark eyes of the dead.

How awful now, when night and silence brood
O'er Earth's repose and Ocean's solitude,
To trace the dim and devious paths that guide
Along Canarah's steep and craggy side,
Where, girt with gloom—inhabited by fear,—
The mountain homes of India's gods appear!
Range above range they rise, each hollow cave
Darkling as death, and voiceless as the grave;
Save that the waving weeds in each recess
With rustling music mock its loneliness;
And beasts of blood disturb, with stealthy tread,
The chambers of the breathless and the dead.
All else of life, of worship, past away,
The ghastly idols fall not, nor decay;
Retain the lip of scorn, the rugged frown,
And grasp the blunted sword and useless crown;
Their altars desecrate, their names untold,
The hands that formed, the hearts that feared—how cold!

Thou too—dark Isle! whose shadow on the sea
Lies like the gloom that mocks our memory

* "A stone painted with red, and placed at the foot of their favourite tree, is sufficient to call forth the devotion of the poor, who bring to it flowers and simple offerings."—J. S. Buckingham.[1]

† The superstitious feeling of the Indian with respect to the peepul tree is well known. Its shade is supposed to be loved and haunted by the dead.

[1] [Author of numerous books and articles on India; an Indian journalist and traveller, and afterwards M.P. for Sheffield (1786–1851).]

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When one bright instant of our former lot
Were grief, remembered, but were guilt, forgot.[1]
Rock of the lonely crest! how oft renewed
Have beamed the summers of thy solitude,
Since first the myriad steps that shook thy shore
Grew frail and few—then paused for evermore!
Answer—ye long-lulled echoes! Where are they
Who clove your mountains with the shafts of day;
Bade the swift life along their marble fly,
And struck their darkness into deity,
Nor claimed from thee—pale temple of the wave—
Record or rest, a glory or a grave?
Now all are cold—the votary as his god,—
And by the shrine he feared, the courts he trod,
The livid snake extends his glancing trail,
And lifeless murmurs mingle on the gale.

Yet glorious still, though void, though desolate,
Proud Dharapori!* gleams thy mountain-gate,
What time, emergent from the eastern wave,
The keen moon's crescent lights thy sacred cave;
And moving beams confuse, with shadowy change,
Thy columns' massive might and endless range.
Far, far beneath, where sable waters sleep,
Those radiant pillars pierce the crystal deep,
And mocking waves reflect, with quivering smile,
Their long recession of refulgent aisle;†
As, where Atlantis hath her lonely home,
Her grave of guilt, beneath the ocean's foam;
Above the lifeless hearth and guardless gate,
The wildly-walking surges penetrate,

* The Indian name for Elephanta.

† The interior of Elephanta is usually damp, and its floor covered with water two or three feet deep. By moonlight its shallowness would be unperceived.

[1] [*Cf.* the fifth stanza in "Agonia," below, p. 207.]

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And sapphire tints of phosphor[1] lightning fall
O'er the broad pillar and the sculptured wall.
So, Dharapori! through thy cold repose
The flooding lustre of the moonlight flows;
New forms of fear,* by every touch displayed,
Gleam, pale and passioned, through the dreadful shade,
In wreathèd groups of dim, distorted life,
In ghastly calmness, or tremendous strife;
While glaring eye and grasping hand attest
The mocked emotion of the marble breast.
Thus, in the fevered dream of restless pain,
Incumbent horror broods upon the brain;
Through mists of blood colossal shapes arise,
Stretch their stiff limbs, and roll their rayless eyes.

Yet knew not here the chisel's touch to trace
The finer lineaments of form and face;
No studious art of delicate design
Conceived the shape, or lingered on the line.
The sculptor learned, on Indus' plains afar,
The various pomp of worship and of war;
Impetuous ardour in his bosom woke,
And smote the animation from the rock.
In close battalions kingly forms advance,†
Wave the broad shield, and shake the soundless lance,

* The sculptures of Elephanta have such "horrible and fearful formes that they make a man's hayre stande upright."—LINSCHOTEN.[2]

† "Some of these figures have helmets of a pyramidal form; others wear crowns richly decorated with jewels; others display large bushy ringlets of

[1] [A favourite word with Ruskin in his early period: *cf.* "On Adèle, by Moonlight," p. 16; introductory note to "The Scythian Guest," p. 101; "The Battle of Montenotte," st. ii. p. 215; "The Crystal Hunter," st. vi. p. 391; and the "Reply to *Blackwood*," § 5, in Vol. III.]

[2] [It is Salsette that Linschoten is here describing. All the galleries (he says) are "full of carved Pagodes, of so fearefull, horrible and develish formes and shapes, that it is wonderful to behold. The other temple or hole of Pagodes in this Iland is in another place, hewed also out of hard rockes, and very great, al full of Pagodes, cut out likewise of the same stones, with so evill favored and uglie shapes, that to enter therein it wd make a man's hayre stand upright" (*The Voyage of John Huyghen van Linschoten to the East Indies*. From the old English translation of 1598; Hakluyt Society, 1885, i. 290, where the above lines by Ruskin are quoted in illustration).]

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With dreadful crest adorned, and orient gem,
Lightens the helm, and gleams the diadem;
Loose o'er their shoulders falls their flowing hair,
With wanton wave, and mocks the unmoving air;
Broad o'er their breasts extend the guardian zones,
Broidered with flowers, and bright with mystic stones;
Poised in ætherial march they seem to swim,
Majestic motion marked in every limb;
In changeful guise they pass—a lordly train,
Mighty in passion, unsubdued in pain;*
Revered as monarchs, or as gods adored,
Alternately they rear the sceptre and the sword.

Such were their forms, and such their martial mien,
Who met by Indus' shore the Assyrian queen,†
When, with reverted force, the Indian dyed
His javelin in the pulses of her pride,
And cast, in death-heaps, by the purple flood,
Her strength of Babylonian multitude.

And mightier ones are there—apart—divine,
Presiding genii of the mountain-shrine:
Behold, the giant group, the united three,
Faint symbol of an unknown Deity!
Here, frozen into everlasting trance,
Stern Siva's quivering lip and hooded glance;
There, in eternal majesty serene,
Proud Brahma's painless brow, and constant mien;
There glows the light of Veeshnu's guardian smile,
But on the crags that shade yon inmost aisle

curled or flowing hair. In their hands they grasp sceptres and shields, the symbols of justice and the ensigns of religion, the weapons of war and the trophies of peace."—MAURICE, *Antiq. of India*, vol. ii. p. 145.

* Many of them have countenances expressive of mental suffering.

† Semiramis. M. D'Ancarville supposes the cave to have been excavated by her army; and insists on the similarity between the costume of the sculptured figures and that of her Indian adversaries. See *D'Ancarville*, vol. i. p. 121.

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Shine not, ye stars! Annihilation's lord *
There waves, with many an arm, the unsated sword;
Relentless holds the cup of mortal pain,
And shakes the spectral links that wreathe his ghastly chain.

Oh, could these lifeless lips be taught to tell
(Touched by Chaldean art, or Arab spell)
What votaries here have knelt, what victims died,
In pangs, their gladness, or in crimes, their pride,
How should we shun the awful solitude,
And deem the intruding footsteps dashed in blood!
How might the altar-hearths grow warm and red,
And the air shadowy with avenging dead!
Behold!—he stirs—that cold, colossal king!
'Tis but the uncertain shade the moonbeams fling;
Hark! a stern voice awakes with sudden thrill!
'Twas but the wandering wind's precarious will,—
The distant echo dies, and all the cave is still.

Yet fancy, floating on the uncertain light,
Fills with her crowded dreams the course of night;
At her wild will ætherial forms appear,
And sounds, long silent, strike the startled ear:
Behold the dread Mithratic rite reclaim †
Its pride of ministers, its pomp of flame!
Along the winding walls, in ordered row,
Flash myriad fires—the fretted columns glow—
Beaming above, the imitative sky
Extends the azure of its canopy,
Fairest where imaged star and airy sprite
Move in swift beauty and entrancing light;

* Alluding to a sculpture representing the evil principle of India: he seems engaged in human sacrifice, and wears a necklace of skulls.

† Throughout the description of the rites of Mithra, I have followed Maurice, whose indefatigable research seems almost to have demonstrated the extreme antiquity, at least, of the Elephanta cavern, as well as its application to the worship of the solar orb and of fire. For a detailed account of this worship, see Maurice, *Indian Antiq.*, vol. ii. sec. 7.

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A golden sun reflected lustre flings,
And wandering Dewtahs * wave their crimson wings;
Beneath, fed richly from the Arabian urn,
Undying lamps before the altar burn;
And sleepless eyes the sacred sign behold,
The spiral orb of radiated gold;
On this the crowds of deep-voiced priests attend,
To this they loudly cry, they lowly bend;
O'er their wan brows the keen emotions rise,
And pious phrenzy flashes from their eyes;
Phrenzy in mercy sent, in torture tried,
Through paths of death their only guard and guide,
When, in dread answer to their youth's appeal,
Rose the red fire and waved the restless steel,†
And rushed the wintry billow's wildest wreck,—
Their God hath called them, and shall danger check?
On—on—for ever on, though roused in wrath
Glare the grim lion on their lonely path;
Though, starting from his coiled malignant rest,
The deadly dragon lift his crimson crest;
Though corpse-like shadows round their footsteps flock,
And shafts of lightning cleave the incumbent rock;
On, for behold, enduring honours wait
To grace their passage through the golden gate;‡
Glorious estate, and more than mortal power,
Succeed the dreadful expiating hour;
Impurpled robes their weary limbs enfold
With stars enwoven, and stiff with heavenly gold;

* Inferior spirits of various power and disposition, holding in the Hindoo mythology the place of angels. They appear in multitudes on the roof of the Elephanta cavern.

† Alluding to the dreadful ceremonies of initiation which the priests of Mithra were compelled to undergo, and which seem to have had a close correspondence with the Eleusinian mysteries. See Maurice, *Antiq. of India*, vol. v. p. 620.

‡ The sidereal metempsychosis was represented in the Mithratic rites by the ascent of a ladder, on which there were seven gates: the first of lead, representing Saturn; the second of tin, Venus; the third brass, Jupiter; the fourth iron, Mercury; the fifth mixed, Mars; the sixth silver, the Moon; the seventh of gold, the Sun.

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The mitra * veils their foreheads, rainbow-dyed,
Their [1] measured steps imperial sceptres guide;
Glorious they move, and pour upon the air
The cloud of incense and the voice of prayer;
While, through the hollow vault, around them rise
Deep echoes from the conch of sacrifice,[2]
In passioned gusts of sound,—now loud, now low,
With billowy pause, the mystic murmurs flow
Far dwindling on the breeze. Ere yet they die
Canarah hears, and all his peaks reply;
His crested chasms the vocal winds explore,
Waste on the deep, and wander on the shore.
Above, the starry gloom is thrilled with fear,
The forests shake, the circling hamlets hear,
And wake to worship. Many an isle around,
Assembling votaries swell the sacred sound,
And, troop by troop, along the woodland ways,
In equal measures pour responsive praise:
To Mithra first their kindling songs addressed
Lull his long slumbers in the watery west;
Next to the strength of each celestial sign
They raise the choral chaunt, the breathing line;
Keen through the arch of heaven their hymns arise,
Auspicious splendours deck the answering skies.
The sacred cohorts, maddening as they sing,
Far through the air their flashing torches fling;

* The attire of Mithra's priests was splendid: the robes of purple, with the heavenly constellations embroidered on them in gold. They wore girdles representative of the zodiacal circle, and carried a golden sceptre in the form of a serpent. Ezekiel speaks of them as "exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads" (xxiii. 15).

[1] [The reading *the* instead of *their* occurs in editions 4, 5, and 6; but *their* is certainly right.]

[2] [The reading *couch* instead of *conch* occurs in editions 4, 5, and 6. The compilers of the *Bibliography of John Ruskin* (vol. i. p. 2) describe *conch* as an "obvious printer's error." It is the later reading *couch* (meaningless in the connexion) that deserves the description. The author used *conch* "referring to the conch-shell, *Sankha*, blown at sacrificial rites, figured in Sir G. Birdwood's *Industrial Arts of India*, Part I., Plate N." —*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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From rock to rock the rushing glories leap,
Climb the wide hills, and clothe the central steep,
Till through the endless night a living line
Of lustre opens on the bounding brine;
Ocean rejoices, and his isles prolong,
With answering zeal, those bursts of flame and song,
Till the strong vulture on Colombo's peak
Awakes with ruffled plume and startled shriek,
And the roused panther of Almorah's wood
Howls through his violated solitude.

'Tis past, the mingled dream, though slow and grey
On mead and mountain break the dawning day;
Though stormy wreaths of lingering cloud oppress
Long time the winds that breathe—the rays that bless,
They come, they come. Night's fitful visions fly
Like autumn leaves, and fade from fancy's eye;
So shall the God of might and mercy dart
His day beams through the caverns of the heart;
Strike the weak idol from its ancient throne,
And vindicate the temple for His own.
Nor will He long delay. A purer light
Than Mithra cast shall claim a holier rite;
A mightier voice than Mithra's priests could pour
Resistless soon shall sound along the shore;
Its strength of thunder vanquished fiends shall own,
And idols tremble through their limbs of stone.

Vain now the lofty light—the marble gleam—
Of the keen shaft that rose by Gunga's stream!
When round its base the hostile lightnings glowed,
And mortal insult mocked a god's abode,
What power, Destroyer,* seized with taming trance
Thy serpent sceptre and thy withering glance?

* Siva. This column was dedicated to him at Benares; and a tradition prevailed among his worshippers, that as soon as it should fall, one universal

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Low in the dust, its rocky sculptures rent,
Thine own memorial proves thee impotent.
Thy votaries mourn thy cold unheeding sleep,
Chide where they praised, and where they worshipped, weep.

Yes! he shall fall, though once his throne was set
Where the high heaven and crested mountains met;
Though distant shone with many an azure gem
The glacier glory of his diadem;[1]
Though sheets of sulphurous cloud and wreathèd storm
Cast veil of terror round his shadowy form.
All, all are vain! It comes, the hallowed day,
Whose dawn shall rend that robe of fear away;
Then shall the torturing spells that midnight knew
Far in the cloven dells of Mount Meru,
Then shall the moan of phrenzied hymns, that sighed
Down the dark vale where Gunga's waters glide,
Then shall the idol chariot's thunder cease
Before the steps of them that publish peace.
Already are they heard,—how fair, how fleet,
Along the mountains flash their bounding feet![2]
Disease and death before their presence fly;
Truth calls, and gladdened India hears the cry,
Deserts the darkened path her fathers trod,
And seeks redemption from the Incarnate God.

[Age 19–20.]

religion would extend over India, and Brahma be no more worshipped. It was lately thrown down in a quarrel between the Hindoos and Mussulmans. (See *Heber's Journal.*[3])

Siva is spoken of in the following lines, as representative of Hindoo deities in general. His worship seems to have arisen in the fastnesses of the Himalayas, accompanied with all the gloomy features characteristic of the superstitions of hill-countries.

[1] [*Cf.* above, lines 121–122, and below, pp. 382, 432.]
[2] [*Cf.* "Awake, awake," below, p. 246.]
[3] [*Narrative of a Journey . . . from Calcutta to Bombay*, by Reginald Heber, Bishop of Calcutta, 1828.]

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THE SCYTHIAN GUEST[1]

When the master of a Scythian family died, he was placed in his state chariot, and carried to visit every one of his blood-relations. Each of them gave him and his attendants a splendid feast, at which the dead man sat at the head of the table, and a piece of everything was put on his plate. In the morning he continued his circuit. This round of visits generally occupied nearly forty days, and he was never buried till the whole number had elapsed. I have taken him at about six days old, when a little phosphoric light might play about his skin in the dark, and yet the corruption would not, in a cool country, have made anything shapeless, or decidedly unpleasant. See HERODOTUS, *Melpomene*, [iv.] 73.

I

THE feast is full, the guests are gay,
  Though at his lance-illumined door
Still must the anxious master stay;
  For, by the echoing river shore,
He hears the hot and hurrying beat
Of harnessed horses' flying feet,

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1840, pp. 52–60. Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 121–130; the American edition, pp. 62–74; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 142–150. The indentation of the lines, followed in the 1891 edition and here, was first introduced in the American edition. No MS. is extant. In the preface to *Friendship's Offering* there was a special word of thanks to the author of this poem (see above, p. 58 *n*). It appears that in the preface, as written, there was a further allusion to J. R., as having won the Newdigate Prize at Oxford. Ruskin's father objected to this passage, and Harrison struck it out; but collectors of such minutiæ may note that some copies with the preface in its original form had already gone to America. The passage in which Ruskin's father stated his objection is worth reading for the fine temper it shows:—

> "In regard to John (he wrote from Sidmouth on August 3, 1839), we are all of one mind, and do most earnestly entreat of you to annul everything about his prize poem or his University. The taste of Oxford will not bear these things. If he had ten times the honour heaped upon him by that University, he must wear it meekly and unconsciously, or not resemble her sons. I am aware that all this is giving an importance to trifles, which his best production may still be considered; but whether he turn out a poet or poetaster, I wish to exercise caution in his mode of coming before the public. Indeed, I believe he and I are pretty well agreed upon this point, that he shall never seek the public, nor think of the public, nor write for the public. If he writes well the public will find him out, and I have no objection to their one day paying for the discovery; but as to inviting them to applaud, or producing anything that it may be sold, I am sure he never will be so disposed." (*Cf.* p. xxxiv. *n*).

An issue of *The Scythian Guest* in separate form has the following title-page:—

> The Scythian Guest; | A Poem. | By | John Ruskin. | MDCCCXLIX | (Printed for the Author).

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And waits to watch, and yearns to greet
The coming of the brave.
Behold—like showers of silver sleet,
His lines of lances wind and wave:
He comes as he was wont to ride
By Hypanis' war-troubled tide,
When, like the west wind's sternest stoop,
Was the strength of his tempestuous troop,

This reprint is a small quarto, pp. vi.+15, in buff-coloured paper wrappers. On pp. v.–vi. is the following Preface, signed "J. R." :—

> "Before I had abandoned the practice of writing verse, and while I was still young, the reading of Herodotus furnished me with subjects for several poems contributed to Annuals; and however unwilling I might be to stand for public judgment as a poet by bringing together those uncollected productions, I cannot pretend to think them so wholly bad that no sample should be rescued and preserved. Perhaps the most worthy of this clemency is the piece entitled 'The Scythian Guest,' to which, when printed in *Friendship's Offering*, I prefixed the following words of argument." [Here follows the passage given above "When the master . . . decidedly unpleasant."]

This reprint, though dated 1849, was not included in R. H. Shepherd's *Bibliography* (1878, 1881): *cf.* note on separate issue of *Leoni*, Vol. I. p. 288. It was described in Wise and Smart's *Bibliography* (1893), ii. 227. A copy (now in the "John Rylands" Library at Manchester) was sold in 1892 for £65. The authenticity of the Preface, and therefore of the separate issue as "printed for the author," has, like that of the reprint of *Leoni*, been called in question, and the editors are unable to guarantee its genuineness. There is in this case no printer's name on the pamphlet. The style of the Preface is certainly not characteristic of Ruskin, and its substance and the date present difficulties in the light of information now accessible to the editors. Among the papers at Brantwood is a list of all Ruskin's published verses, drawn up by his father between 1834 and 1850, with particulars of their appearance in print; no reference occurs therein to any separate issue of "The Scythian Guest." The idea of collecting Ruskin's poems originated with his father in the year 1847 (see above, p. xxix.). The task, upon which Ruskin's father spent much time and trouble, must have been well in hand in 1849. It seems improbable that at a time when the reprint of *all* the published pieces was in preparation by his father, Ruskin should himself have printed *one* of them separately and have written of it in the terms of the Preface given above.

The poem, as appears from the correspondence of W. H. Harrison, was written before April 18, 1839. On sending it to him on that day, the author's father wrote: "I hope you will like the enclosed. It seems very powerful, and the struggling, labouring rhyme, he says, has a meaning in it. The note should be at the end to preserve the interest in reading the poem. I hope you will keep in the touch of 'about six days old,' which is Byronic." The piece must either have been written before "Salsette" or immediately after. The earlier date seems more probable. In the *Poems*, 1850, both this and "The Scythian Banquet Song" are put too late. The *Literary Gazette*, which had highly praised "The Scythian Banquet Song" (see above, p. 58 *n*), fell foul of "The Scythian Guest." "We confidently anticipated," it said (No. 1192, Nov. 23, 1839), "that this young aspirant would become a poet. All that promised of good has vanished; and, spoilt by facility in verbiage and compounds seasoned with silly and perpetual alliteration, poor J. R., the bepraised of the Preface, has committed as considerable a quantity of meaningless trash as could readily be measured off in the same given number of lines and pages. Hoping that censure will have a better effect upon him than undeserved panegyric, and thus restore him to the fold, we shall take the trouble to exhibit a few of his errors," etc. etc.]

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And when their dark steeds' shadows swift
Had crossed the current's foamless drift,
The light of the river grew dazzled and dim,
With the flash of the hair, and the flight of the limb.

II

He comes—urged on by shout and lash,
His favourite courser flies;
There's frenzy in its drooping dash,
And sorrow in its eyes.
Close on its hoofs the chariots crash,
Their shook reins ring—their axles flash—
The charioteers are wild and rash;
Panting and cloven, the swift air feels
The red breath of the whirling wheels,
Hissing with heat and drunk with speed
Of wild delight that seems to feed
Upon the fire of its own flying;
Yet he for whom they race is lying
Motionless in his chariot, and still,
Like one of weak desire or fettered will.
Is it the sun-lulled sleep of weariness
That weighs upon him? Lo! there is no stress
Of slumber on his eyelids—some slow trance
Seems dwelling on the darkness of his glance;
Its depth is quiet, and its keenness cold
As an eagle's, quenched with lightning—the close fold
Of his strong arms is listless, like the twine
Of withered weeds along the waving line
Of flowing streams; and o'er his face a strange
Deep shadow is cast, which doth not move nor change.

III

At the known gate the coursers check,
With panting breast and lowly neck:
From kingly group, from menial crowd,
The cry of welcome rings aloud:

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It was not wont to be so weak,—
Half a shout, and half a shriek,
  Mixed with the low yet penetrating quiver
Of constrained voices, such as creep
Into cold words, when, dim and deep
  Beneath, the wild heart's death-like shiver
  Mocks at the message that the lips deliver.

IV

Doth he not hear? Will he not wake?
That shout of welcome did not break,
Even for an instant, on the trace
Of the dark shadow o'er his face.
Behold, his slaves in silence lift
That frame so strong, those limbs so swift,
Like a sick child's; though half erect
He rose when first his chariot checked,
He fell—as leaves fall on the spot
Where summer sun shall waken not
The mingling of their veined sensation
With the black earth's wormy desolation.
With stealthy tread, like those that dread
  To break the peace of sorrow's slumber,
They move, whose martial force he led,
  Whose arms his passive limbs encumber;
Through passage and port, through corridor and court,
They hold their dark, slow-trodden track:
  Beneath that crouching figure's scowl
The household dogs hang wildly back,
  With wrinkled lip, and hollow howl;
And on the mien of those they meet,
  Their presence passes, like the shadow
Of the grey storm-cloud's swirling sheet,
  Along some soft sun-lighted meadow;
For those who smiled before they met
  Have turned away to smile no more;

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Even as they pass, their lips forget
  The words they wove—the hues they wore;
Even as they look, the eyes grow wet,
. That glanced most bright before!

V

The feast is ranged, the guests are met;
  High on the central throne
That dark and voiceless Lord is set,
  And left alone.
And the revel is loud among the crowd,
  As the laugh on surges free,
Of their merry and multitudinous lips,
When the fiery foamlight skims and skips
  Along the sounding sea.
The wine is red and wildly shed,
The wreathed jest is gaily sped,
And the rush of their merriment rises aloof
Into the shade of the ringing roof;
And yet their cheeks look faint and dead,
  And their lips look pale and dry;
In every heart there dwells a dread,
  And a trouble in every eye.

VI

For, sternly charmed, or strangely chill,
That lonely Lord sits stiff and still,
Far in the chamber gathered back,
Where the lamps are few, and the shadows are black;
So that the strained eye scarce can guess
At the fearful form of his quietness,
And shrinks from what it cannot trace,
  Yet feels, is worse than even the error
That veils, within that ghastly space,
The shrouded form and shadowed face
  Of indistinct, unmoving terror.

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That deadened ear may still be true
To the soft voice that once it knew;
And the throbs that beat below the heart,
  And the joys that burn above,
Shall bid the light of laughter dart
  Along the lips of love.
Alas! those tones are all untold
On ear and heart so closed and cold;
The slumber shall be sound,—the night—how long!
That will not own the power of smile or song;
Those lips of love may burn—his eyes are dim;
That voice of joy may wake, but not for him.

IX

The rushing wine, the rose's flush,
  Have crowned the goblet's glancing brim;
But who shall call the blossom's blush,
  Or bid the goblet flow for him?
For how shall thirst or hunger's heat
  Attend the sunless track,
Towards the cool and calm retreat,
From which his courser's flashing feet
  Can never bear him back?
There, by the cold, corpse-guarded hill,
The shadows fall both broad and still;
There shall they fall at night,—at noon,
  Nor own the day-star's warning;
Grey shades, that move not with the moon,
  And perish not with morning.

X

Farewell, farewell, thou Presence pale!
  The bed is stretched where thou shouldst be;
The dawn may lift its crimson veil,
  It doth not breathe, nor burn for thee.

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The mien of might, the glance of light,
That checked or cheered the war's career,
Are dreadless in the fiery fight,
Are dreadful only *here*.
Exulting Hatred, red and rife,
May smile to mark thine altered brow;
There are but those who loved in life,
Who fear thee, now.
Farewell, farewell, thou Presence pale!
The couch is near where thou shouldst be;
Thy troops of Death have donned their mail,
And wait and watch for thee.

[Age 20.]

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TO ADÈLE[1]

I

THAT slow and heavy bell hath knolled,
Like thunder o'er a shoreless sea;
I have not heard it, since it told
The hour that bore me back to thee:
The hour whose wings had lulled me long,
When hope was cold and grief was strong;
Whose kindness ever came, to keep
The shade of sorrow from my sleep,
And mocked my dreams, but, wild and far,
Departed with the Morning star,—
Yet came at last. That lonely bell
Had waked me with its measured knell;
And though my soul, in its awaking
From dreams of thee, is always chill,
I knew that hour, their brightness breaking,
Had scattered only to fulfil.
And, through my trembling spirit sent,
The billowy echoes quivering went,
As the swift throb of morning breaks
Through the thin rain-cloud's folded flakes;
Even as, that hour, it beamed above
The azure of the expanded plains,
And filled the heaven with light, like love,
And kindled through its azure veins,
As the keen joy through mine:

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1840, pp. 244–248, entitled "To * * *," and signed "ρ." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 203–207, entitled "To Adèle"; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 239–242. No MS. is extant. In the 1850 ed. the poem is dated "*ætat* 21"; but it appears from a letter from Ruskin to W. H. Harrison, of July 3, 1839, that the lines were written before that date. In a somewhat later letter Ruskin's father, to the same correspondent, states that the poem was written at Oxford, and the madhouse referred to in the note (on p. 112) is in that locality.]

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I knew, that ere those purple stains
Of heaven should see the sun's decline,
And melt along the western sea,
A brighter sun should rise for me.

II

And it hath risen,—and it hath set,
The glory and the tone
Of twilight have scarce passed, and yet
I have been long alone.
It is for those who can forget,
So that the path of time they tread
Is strewed with pangs and passions dead,
To trace their periods of weak pain
By the cold shadows, that reveal not
What once they felt—what now they feel not.
To those, with whom the linkèd chain
Of days and years can never press
Upon their unforgetfulness,
An hour may be as long,
When its keen thoughts are dark and swift,
And when its pangs are strong
As the onward, undistinguished drift
Of the calm years, that still retain
One hope, one passion, and one pain.

III

That sun hath risen—that sun hath set,
And though the dim night is not yet
So lifeless or so dark, for me,
As it hath been—as it shall be,
There's that of dew and chillness thrown
Across my thoughts and brow,
Whose inward meaning none have known,
Not even thou—
Thou—for whose sake that brow is dark,
Whose constant pang thou canst not mark.

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Alas! if pity be a pain,
I would not wish thee once to see
How much the distant feel for thee,
And feel in vain.

IV

It strikes again, that measured chime;
Hark! its cold vibrations climb
Heavily up the slope of night;
And lo! how quiverings of keen light
Along the starlit waters follow
Those undulations hoarse and hollow,
That move among the tufted trees
That crown yon eastern hill,
Which midnight frees from bird and breeze,
Bidding their leaves lie still.
There—deeply, softly, charmed and checked,
They pass the pile with slower swelling,
Where,* wildly wrung or early wrecked,
Pure heart and piercing intellect
Now keep their unattended dwelling:
And sorrow's sob and phrenzy's shriek
Are calm beneath their cadence weak;
And torture tamed, and grief beguiled,
Have turned, have listened, and have smiled.

V

My own quick thoughts, which were as wild,
Have sunk at once, I know not why,—
Not less sad, but far more mild,
As these low sounds float by;
Low sounds, that seem the passing bell
For the swift and dark-eyed hours, whose rushing
Around the earth was fraught with flushing,
Kindled by the entrancing spell
That breathed of thee,

* A madhouse in a clump of trees.

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When from thy lips and from thy presence fell
  The stream of light, of melody,
That on their wings did glow and dwell,
  Till each was faint with his own ecstasy.
And they are dead,—cold and dead;
  Yet in the light of their own beauty lying,
  That light, which is alone undimmed, undying,
When for all else the shroud is spread,—
Imperishable, though so pale,
It burns beneath the moveless veil,
That o'er their beauty and their breath
Hath cast a guise and charm of death:
A guise how false!—a charm how vain!
For each of the departing train
Drank, as it passed, beholding Thee,
First joy—then Immortality.

[Age 20.]

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THE LAST SONG OF ARION[1]

ἰὼ λιγείας μέλος ἀηδόνος.
. . . κύκνου δίκην
τὸν ὕστατον μέλψασα θανάσιμον γόον.
[Æsch. *Agam.* 1145, 1444.][2]

The circumstances which led to the introduction of Arion to his Dolphin are differently related by Herodotus and Lucian. Both agree that he was a musician of the highest order, born at Methymna, in the island of Lesbos, and that he acquired fame and fortune at the court of Periander of Corinth. Herodotus affirms that he became desirous of seeing Italy and Sicily: and having made a considerable fortune in those countries, hired a Corinthian vessel to take him back to Corinth. When half-way over the gulf, the mariners conceived the idea of seizing the money, and throwing the musician into the sea. Arion started several objections, but finding that they were overruled, requested he might be permitted to sing them a song. Permission being granted, he wreathed himself and his harp with flowers,—sang (Lucian says) in the sweetest way in the world, and leaped into the sea. The historian proceeds, with less confidence, to state that a dolphin carried him safe ashore. Lucian agrees with this account, except in one particular: he makes no mention of the journey to Sicily, and supposes Arion to have been

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1842, pp. 48–56, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 239–248, where the last thirteen lines of stanza ix. and the footnotes on "Cynoceme" and "keleust" are added "from MS." In the American edition, pp. 190–202, the added lines were not included. They were restored in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 263–272. No MS. is extant.

In the ed. of 1850 the poem is dated "*ætat.* 22" (*i.e.* 1841); but the poem had been in W. H. Harrison's hands for some time before publication, and was written in 1839. In a letter dated July 14, 1840, Ruskin's father writes: "I will gladly pay the few shillings for type-setting 'Song of Arion,' if you will spare me the proof or exact copy, as John's is imperfect, and no one shall see it; only I require it as written 1839, in my private set." For a reference to the intention of the poem, see *Letters to a College Friend*, Vol. I. p. 437.

The story is from Herodotus, i. 23, 24, and Lucian's *Deorum Dialogi* (Neptuni et Delphines). Lucian was an author whom Ruskin's father was in the habit of reading (probably in the translation edited by Dryden) in the family circle, and Ruskin had studied him also at school. In a rhyming letter to his father (March 10, 1834), Ruskin looks forward to his return home, and recounts among the day's delights the evening hour when "Lucian, or Gil Blas, is read, Or Walter Scott, 'till time for bed."

In a prose letter to his father (Feb. 27, 1832) he says:—

> "I am going on with Lucian, and am now, I am happy to say, perfectly well acquainted with his style, and am almost able to read him right off without any hesitation. After Demosthenes he is nothing."

In later writings Ruskin returned incidentally to the myth of Arion. A grotesque of Arion on his dolphin is sculptured on one of the capitals of the Ducal Palace (see *Stones of Venice*, vol. i. ch. xx. § 25; vol. ii. ch. viii. § 77; and see *Queen of the Air*, § 39.]

[2] [Ah, for the fate of the shrill-voiced nightingale! . . . Like a swan, singing the last dying dirge.]

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returning from Corinth to his native Lesbos, when the attack was made on him. I have taken him to Sicily with Herodotus, but prefer sending him straight home. He is more interesting returning to his country, than paying his respects at the court of Corinth.

I

Look not upon me thus impatiently,
Ye children of the deep;
My fingers fail, and tremble as they try
To stir the silver sleep with song,
Which, underneath the surge ye sweep,
These lulled and listless chords must keep—
Alas—how long!

II

The salt sea wind has touched my heart; its thrill
Follows the passing plectrum, low, and chill;
Woe for the wakened pulse of Ocean's breath,
That injures these with silence—me, with death.
Oh! wherefore stirred the wind on Pindus' chain,[1]
When joyful morning called me to the main?
Flashed the keen oars—our canvass,[2] filled and free,
Shook like white fire along the purple sea;
Fast from the helm the shattering surges flew,
Pale gleamed our path along their cloven blue;
And orient path, wild wind, and purple wave,
Pointed and urged and guided—to the grave.

III

Ye winds! by far Methymna's steep,
I loved your voices long;
And gave your spirits power to keep
Wild syllables of song.

[1] [In a letter to W. H. Harrison, written after the proof of this poem was passed, Ruskin said: "I quite forgot till this morning an error in one of the lines of 'Arion'—'the winds on Pindus' chain.' When I wrote this, I thought of sending him from Greece; afterwards I altered to Sicily: so that the winds could not rise on Pindus. It must be 'Etna's chain,' if you think the critics will be geographical. I don't like altering it, for Pindus is a much prettier word; and as, throughout the poem, there is only one allusion to Sicily, perhaps it may pass. Do in this as you like, or as you can."]

[2] [Ruskin in his *juvenilia* always spelt this word with a double *s*.]

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When, folded in the crimson shade
That veils Olympus' cloud-like whiteness,
The slumber of your life was laid
In the lull of its own lightness,
Poised on the voiceless ebb and flow
Of the beamy-billowed summer snow,
Still at my call ye came—
Through the thin wreaths of undulating flame
That, panting in their heavenly home,
With crimson shadows flush the foam
Of Adramyttium,[1] round the ravined hill,
Awakened with one deep and living thrill;
Ye came, and, with your steep descent,
The hollow forests waved and bent;
Their leaf-lulled echoes caught the winding call
Through incensed glade and rosy dell,
Mixed with the breath-like pause and swell
Of waters following in eternal fall,
In azure waves, that just betray
The music quivering in their spray,
Beneath its silent seven-fold arch of day;
High in pale precipices hung
The lifeless rocks of rigid marble rung,
Waving the cedar crests along their brows sublime;
Swift ocean heard beneath, and flung
His tranced and trembling waves in measured time,
Along his golden sands with faintly falling chime.

IV

Alas! had ye forgot the joy I gave,
That ye did hearken to my call this day?
Oh! had ye slumbered—when your sleep could save,
I would have fed you with sweet sound for aye;
Now ye have risen to bear my silent soul away.

[1] [A city of Asia Minor on the coast of Mysia. Acts, xxvii. 2; *Herod.* vii. 42.]

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V

I heard ye murmur through the Etnæan caves,
When joyful dawn had touched the topmost dome;—
I saw ye light, along the mountain waves
Far to the east, your beacon-fires of foam,
And deemed ye rose to bear your weary minstrel home.
Home? it shall be that home indeed,
Where tears attend and shadows lead
The steps of man's return;
Home! woe is me, no home I need,
Except the urn.
Behold—beyond these billows' flow,
I see Methymna's mountains glow;
Long, long desired, their peaks of light
Flash on my sickened soul and sight,
And heart and eye almost possess
Their vales of long-lost pleasantness;
But eye and heart, before they greet
That land, shall cease to burn and beat.
I see, between the sea and land,
The winding belt of golden sand;
But never may my footsteps reach
The brightness of that Lesbian beach,
Unless, with pale and listless limb,
Stretched by the water's utmost brim,
Naked, beneath my native sky,
With bloodless brow, and darkened eye,
An unregarded, ghastly heap,
For bird to tear, and surge to sweep,—
Too deadly calm—too coldly weak,
To reck of billow, or of beak.

VI

My native isle! when I have been
Reft of my love, and far from thee,
My dreams have traced, my soul hath seen
Thy shadow on the sea,

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And waked in joy, but not to seek
Thy winding strand, or purple peak;
For strand and peak had waned away
Before the desolating day,
  On Acro-Corinth redly risen,
That burned above Ægina's bay,
  And laughed upon my palace prison.
How soft on other eyes it shone,
When light, and land, were all their own!
I looked across the eastern brine,
And knew *that* morning was not mine.

VII

But thou art near me now, dear isle!
And I can see the lightning smile
By thy broad beach, that flashes free
Along the pale lips of the sea.
Near, nearer, louder, breaking, beating,
  The billows fall with ceaseless shower;
It comes,—dear isle!—our hour of meeting—
  O God! across the soft eyes of the hour
Is thrown a black and blinding veil;
Its steps are swift, its brow is pale,
Before its face, behold—there stoop,
From their keen wings, a darkening troop
Of forms like unto it—that fade
Far in unfathomable shade;
Confused, and limitless, and hollow,
It comes, but there are none that follow—
It pauses, as they paused, but not
  Like them to pass away;
For I must share its shadowy lot,
  And walk with it, where, wide and grey,
  That caverned twilight chokes the day,
And, underneath the horizon's starless line,
Shall drink, like feeble dew, its life and mine.

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VIII

Farewell, sweet harp! for lost and quenched
Thy swift and sounding fire shall be;
And these faint lips be mute and blenched,
That once so fondly followed thee.
Oh! deep within the winding shell
The slumbering passions haunt and dwell,
As memories of its ocean tomb
Still gush within its murmuring gloom;
But closed the lips, and faint the fingers
Of fiery touch, and woven words,
To rouse the flame that clings and lingers
Along the loosened chords.
Farewell! thou silver-sounding lute,—
I must not wake thy wildness more,
When I and thou lie dead, and mute,
Upon the hissing shore.

IX

The sounds I summon fall and roll,
In waves of memory, o'er my soul;
And there are words I should not hear,
That murmur in my dying ear,
Distant all, but full and clear,
Like a child's footstep in its fear,
Falling in Colonos' wood,
When the leaves are sere;
And waves of black, tumultuous blood
Heave and gush about my heart;
Each a deep and dismal mirror
Flashing back its broken part
Of visible, and changeless terror;
And fiery foam-globes leap and shiver
Along that crimson, living river:
Its surge is hot, its banks are black,
And weak, wild thoughts that once were bright,
And dreams, and hopes of dead delight,

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Drift on its desolating track,
And lie along its shore:
Oh! who shall give that brightness back,
Or those lost hopes restore?
Or bid that light of dreams be shed
On the glazed eyeballs of the dead?
The lonely search of love may cease,
Bourned by the side of earthly graves;
But sorrow finds no place of peace
Amidst the wildly walking waves.
Oh! many a thought my soul has sent,
And many a dim and yearning dream—
They seem to tread, with steps intent,
Their hopeless haunt of long lament;
Beside the shore of Cynoseme,*
The bright oars beat by the sea-swan's roost;
They are waked with the cry of the keen keleust,†
But the life of the earth, and the smile of the sky,
Are above a cold heart and a lustreless eye.

X

That light of dreams! My soul hath cherished
One dream too fondly, and too long;
Hope—dread—desire—delight have perished,
And every thought whose voice was strong
To curb the heart to good, or wrong;
But that sweet dream is with me still,
Like the shade of an eternal hill,
Cast on a calm and narrow lake,
That hath no room except for it—and heaven:
It doth not leave me, nor forsake;
And often with my soul hath striven
To quench or calm its worst distress,
Its silent sense of loneliness.

* Cynoseme, a promontory in the Hellespont.
† The "keleust," in the Greek galleys, timed the stroke of the oar.

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And must it leave me now?
Alas! dear lady, where my steps must tread,
What 'vails the echo or the glow,
That word can leave, or smile can shed,
Among the soundless, lightless dead?
Soft o'er my brain the lulling dews shall fall,
While I sleep on, beneath the heavy sea,
Coldly,—I shall not hear though thou shouldst call.
Deeply,—I shall not dream—not even of thee.

XI

And when my thoughts to peace depart
Beneath the unpeaceful foam,
Wilt thou remember him, whose heart
Hath ceased to be thy home?
Nor bid thy breast its love subdue,
For one no longer fond nor true;
Thine ears have heard a treacherous tale,—
My words were false,—my faith was frail.
I feel the grasp of death's white hand
Laid heavy on my brow,
And from the brain those fingers brand,
The chords of memory drop like sand,
And faint in muffled murmurs die
The passioned[1] word, the fond reply,
The deep, redoubled vow.
Oh! dear Ismene, flushed and bright
Although thy beauty burn,
It cannot wake to love's delight
The crumbling ashes, quenched and white,
Nor pierce the apathy of night
Within the marble urn:
Let others wear the chains I wore,
And worship at the unhonoured shrine—
For me, the chain is strong no more,
No more the voice divine:

[1] ["Passionate" in the ed. of 1891.]

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Go forth, and look on those that live,
And robe thee with the love they give,
  But think no more of mine;
Or think of all that pass thee by,
With heedless heart and unveiled eye,
That none can love thee *less* than I.

XII

Farewell! but do not grieve: thy pain
  Would seek me where I sleep;
Thy tears would pierce, like rushing rain,
  The stillness of the deep.
  Remember, if thou wilt, but do not weep.
Farewell, beloved hills, and native isle:
Farewell to earth's delight, to heaven's smile;
Farewell to sounding air, to purple sea;
Farewell to light,—to life,—to love,—to thee!

[Age 20.]

[Ruskin, who in later years was often the most severe critic of his earlier productions, whether in prose or verse, wrote an interesting letter to W. H. Harrison about the Herodotean poems. Harrison had apparently wanted to know whether Ruskin's source of inspiration in the piece, in treatment as well as in subject, was classical. In reply, he at once defends "Arion" as original and condemns it as hackneyed. The letter is undated, but was probably written before 1850:—

DEN. HILL, *Monday Morning*

MY DEAR MR. HARRISON,—I was quite horror-struck when, on reading over the note you so kindly left with me, I discovered that it referred not to "Orion," the Epic,[1] as I thought, but to a piece of nonsense of which I was not vain when I wrote it, and am now most heartily ashamed.

I recollect showing it in a beseeching way to Henry Acland, who, after reading it *patiently* (all honour to his friendship!) all through, said, with a quiet, annihilating smile, "My dear R., mightn't Arion have done *something* more than lament over his country and his mistress?" The fact is, that every *thought* in it—and it hasn't many—is so irretrievably well known and well used, that I am as much surprised at any trouble being taken about their genealogy, as if I had been asked for a list of all the snuff-stained fingers which a dirty Scotch one-pound note—coming to pieces in mine from sheer age—might possibly have mouldered through. Nevertheless, I can very honestly say, respecting these same dirty notes, that I found them in my own purse without knowing how they came there; and I believe their very commonplaceness arises from their being the genuine and natural expressions of true passion at any age of the

[1] [*Orion*, an epic by R. H. Horne (1843), the early editions of which were sold at a farthing in accordance with a fancy of the author: see *Letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*, i. 145.]

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world, *rather* than from their being borrowed by one writer from another. Certainly I had no notion whatsoever of classicality. I read particularly little of Pagan writing, but from what little I have read, the impression on my mind is rather one of the living being plagued by the tears of the dead, than the dead by those of the living. I recollect a great many complaints of not having had mourning coaches enough at the funerals, or of not having been properly carbonised. I think Melissa plagued Periander of Corinth after her death because she hadn't got gowns enough; but, except on their own account, and when they hadn't got pence to pay the ferry, I don't, really, recollect much interest manifested downstairs with respect to things up here. Protesilaus returns to Laodamia to rebuke her tears, but he does not express himself as having been at all put out of his way by them. Alcestis, from whose dying tenderness one might have expected something of the kind, makes no stipulation whatever but that her husband is not to marry again.[1] . . .

I was about to say, that when I spoke of the feeling in question being common to all *ages* of the world, it was not among all *nations* that I suppose it to have been so, but only among those with whom some traditions of the Patriarchal or Mosaic dispensations had distinctly remained, or in modern times among Christians. Almost all true *ghost* feeling is, I believe, Christian; but the most pure and beautiful expression of this particular one that I recollect is in the Border ballad—

"... The Bairnies grat;
The Mither, though under the mools, heard *that*."

I conceive nothing can beat the purity and precision and intensity of this poetic diction. The bringing the unimportant word to the end of the line where you are compelled to lay the right emphasis upon it by the rhyme;[2] the straightforward unadorned simplicity of it; the quiet order of the natural words—how superior to my turgid piece of cold, degrading, and unnatural simile: "Thy tears would pierce like *rushing rain*"—as if rain ever *did* pierce to a dead man's ear, or as if tears were no more to be counted of than protoxide of hydrogen, or as if a dying man would have thought of the tears being like anything but themselves, or as if a loving man would ever have compared his mistress's tears to a thunder-shower. So far, then, as the mere feeling is concerned, I have little doubt that it was naturally present in my mind, and would be naturally so in the mind of any person of ordinary heart, and that it occurs frequently in writers without rationally exposing them to the charge of piracy, any more than their comparing their mistresses to the sun would, though only one man has done *that* rightly, in the pure way—Chaucer.

"Up rose the Sonne, and up rose Emilie!"[3] . . .

Make what use of this you like.—Ever yours most sincerely,

J. Ruskin.]

[1] [For Melissa, see Herodotus, v. 92; for Laodamia, Lucian's *Dialogues of the Dead*, 23; for Alcestis, Euripides, *Alc.* 395.]

[2] [*Cf.* the author's apology for a terminal *his* in "The Exile of St. Helena," line 79, p. 49.]

[3] [*The Knightes Tale*, 1415.]

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1839–42

THE BROKEN CHAIN[1]

PART FIRST

I

It is most sad to see—to know
This world so full of war and woe,
  E'er since our parents' failing duty
Bequeathed the curse to all below,
  And left the burning breach of beauty.

[1] ["The Broken Chain" was first published as follows: Parts I. and II. in *Friendship's Offering* for 1840, pp. 137–154. Part III. in the same, for 1841, pp. 311–319. Part IV. in the same, for 1842, pp. 359–374. Part V. (with illustration of Amboise) in the same, for 1843, pp. 61–85. The illustration faced p. 72. The parts were all signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." The notes to Part V., here distributed, were given at the end of the poem. The whole poem was reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 131–202, where, though the plate was not given, the note referring to it was retained. *Poems*, 1891, ii. 166–236. The only MS. is a copy of Part V., stanza xvii.–end in J. J. Ruskin's hand (now in MS. Book ia). The poem was written at various dates between 1836 and 1842. In "The Broken Chain" the imitation of Scott (compare, *e.g.*, the beginning of Part II. with the last part of stanza 33, canto ii., of *Marmion*) is supplemented by the influence of Coleridge's *Christabel*. The piece met with some favour from the critical reviews. The *Athenæum* (No. 625, Oct. 15, 1839), in quoting a column of the lines, said: "Though there is a little of the high fantastical about his poetry, it is from the true mint."

In the *Poems*, 1850, Parts I. and II. are dated "*ætat.* 20." That is only correct as indicating the year in which they were finished and published, *Friendship's Offering* for 1840 being published in the autumn of 1839. Parts I. and II., as appears from a letter of the author to W. H. Harrison, were written much earlier. Under date Jan. 15, 1839, he writes:—

> "The beginning of the enclosed fragment was written, as I think, some two years and a half ago, and is therefore, I hope, very shady, compared with its termination. Still, I had a lingering affection for some lines in it, and therefore finished the second part, which was only half done. The third part is wanting, and I am afraid will be wanting; at least, I shall not finish it till I have done with Oxford, and then I hope I shall write better things, and consider this not worth the trouble of termination, especially as my ideas upon the subject of any ending whatsoever are very confused and unconnected indeed. However, as it now stands, I think the fragment finishes pretty satisfactorily—with the death of one personage, and the astonishment of the other, there being only two. I know you will not like the beginning, but if you read on I think you will find it improve."

"I shall be delighted to have it in *Friendship's Offering*," Ruskin writes in another letter, "for though I cannot agree with you in thinking well of the first part, I am

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Where the flower hath fairest hue,
  Where the breeze hath balmiest breath,
Where the dawn hath softest dew,
Where the heaven hath deepest blue,
  There is death.
Where the gentle streams of thinking,
  Through our hearts that flow so free,
Have the deepest, softest sinking
  And the fullest melody;
Where the crown of hope is nearest,
Where the voice of joy is clearest,
Where the heart of youth is lightest,
Where the light of love is brightest,
  There is death.

II

It is the hour when day's delight
  Fadeth in the dewy sorrow
Of the star-inwoven night;
And the red lips of the west
Are in smiles of lightning drest,
  Speaking of a lovely morrow:

rather proud of the second." From a letter of his father to W. H. Harrison it appears that Ruskin went to Amboise in November 1840, specially "to prepare for Part IV. of 'The Broken Chain.'" Some portion of the poem (probably Part IV.) was written at Vercelli on May 27, 1841, under which date he notes in his diary:—

> "A wet afternoon and nothing to do; so I will try for a write up—*olla podrida*. I don't think I will neither; I have written enough stuff here, so here goes for a little 'Broken Chain,' broken with a vengeance."

A further portion may have been written at Neuchâtel. On June 10, 1841, he enters in his diary there: "Wrote some stuff for *F.O.*—commonplace, didn't feel at all in tune." In January 1842 he was writing Part V. "I hope you will like the end," he wrote to the same correspondent, "better than Part IV., as the young lady who has done nothing yet but look first red, and then white, and then yellow, is, I believe, going to say something." He revised the proofs at Chamouni in June 1842, leaving much in this respect to the friendly care of Harrison in England (see letter cited below, p. 222; and for particulars about the drawing of Amboise, p. xlii.). In the retrospect of *Præterita* (ii. ch. iv. § 63), Ruskin retained no affection for the poem. Poem and drawing were, he said, "salutary exercises," as proving to him that he was a "blockhead" in "those directions of imagination."]

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But there's an eye in which, from far,
The chill beams of the evening star
  Do softly move and mildly quiver;
Which, ere the purple mountains meet
The light of morning's misty feet,
  Will be dark—and dark for ever.

III

It was within a convent old,
  Through her lips the low breath sighing,
Which the quick pains did enfold[1]
With a paleness calm, but cold,
  Lay a lovely lady dying.
As meteors from the sunless north
  Through long low clouds illume the air,
So brightly shone her features forth
  Amidst her darkly tangled hair;
And, like a spirit, still and slow,
  A light beneath that raven veil
Moved—where the blood forgot to glow,
As moonbeams shine on midnight snow,
  So dim—so sad—so pale:
And, ever as the death came nearer,
That melancholy light waxed clearer;
It rose, it shone, it never dwindled,
  As if in death it could not die;
The air was filled with it, and kindled
  As souls are by sweet agony.
Where once the life was rich and red,
The burning lip was dull and dead,
As crimson cloud-streaks melt away
Before a ghastly darkened day.
Faint and low the pulses faded,
  One by one, from brow and limb;

[1] [Misprinted "unfold" in the ed. of 1891.]

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There she lay—her dark eyes shaded
By her fingers dim;
And through their paly brightness burning
With a wild inconstant motion,
As reflected stars of morning
Through the crystal foam of ocean.
There she lay—like something holy,
Moveless—voiceless, breathing slowly,
Passing—withering—fainting—failing,
Lulled, and lost, and unbewailing.

IV

The Abbess knelt beside, to bless
Her parting hour with tenderness,
And watched the light of life depart,
With tearful eye and weary heart;
And, ever and anon, would dip
Her fingers in the hallowed water,
And lay it on her parching lip,
Or cross her death damped brow,
And softly whisper—"Peace—my daughter,
For thou shalt slumber softly now."
And upward held, with pointing finger,
The cross before her darkening eye;
Its glance was changing, nor did linger
Upon the ebon and ivory;
Her lips moved feebly, and the air
Between them whispered—not with prayer!
Oh! who shall know what wild and deep
Imaginations rouse from sleep,
Within that heart, whose quick decay
So soon shall sweep them all away.
Oh! who shall know what things they be
That tongue would tell—that glance doth see;
Which rouse the voice, the vision fill,
Ere eye be dark, and tongue be still.

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V

It is most fearful when the light
Of thoughts, all beautiful and bright,
That through the heart's illumination
  Darts burning beams and fiery flashes,
Fades into weak wan animation,
  And darkens into dust and ashes;
And hopes, that to the heart have been
As to the forest is its green,
  (Or as the gentle passing by
Of its spirits' azure wings
  Is to the broad, wind-wearied sky;)
Do pale themselves like fainting things,
  And wither, one by one, away,
Leaving a ghastly silence where
  Their voice was wont to move and play
Amidst the fibres of our feeling,
Like the low and unseen stealing
  Of the soft and sultry air;
That, with its fingers weak, unweaves
  The dark and intertangled hair
Of many moving forest leaves;
And, though their life be lost, do float
Around us still, yet far remote,
And come at the same call, arranged
By the same thoughts; but oh, how changed!
Alas! dead hopes are fearful things,
  To dwell around us, for their eyes
Pierce through our souls like adder stings;
  Vampyre-like, their troops arise,
Each in his own death entranced,
Frozen and corpse-countenanced;
Filling memory's maddened eye
With a shadowed mockery,
And a wan and fevered vision
Of her loved and lost Elysian;

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Until we hail, and love, and bless
The last, strange joy, where joy hath fled,
The last one hope, where hope is dead,
The finger of forgetfulness;
Which, dark as night, and dull as lead,
Comes across the spirit, passing
Like a coldness through night air;
With its withering wings effacing
Thoughts that lived or lingered there;
Light, and life, and joy, and pain,
Till the frozen heart rejoices,
As the echoes of lost voices
Die, and do not rise again;
And shadowy memories wake no more
Along the heart's deserted shore;
But fall and faint away, and sicken
Like a nation fever-stricken,
And see not, from the bosom reft,
The desolation they have left.

VI

Yet, though that trance be still and deep,
It will be broken, ere its sleep
Be dark and unawaked—for ever;
And from the soul quick thoughts will leap
Forth like a sad, sweet-singing river,
Whose gentle waves flow softly o'er
That broken heart,—that desert shore;
The lamp of life leaps up, before
Its light be lost, to live no more;
Ere yet its shell of clay be shattered,
And all the beams it once could pour
In dust of death be darkly scattered.

VII

Alas! the stander-by might tell
That lady's racking thoughts too well;

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The work within he might descry,
By trembling brow, and troubled eye,
That as the lightning, fiery fierce,
  Strikes chasms along the keen ice-plain;
The barbed and burning memories pierce
  Her dark and dying brain.
And many mingled visions swim
Within the convent-chamber dim;
The sad twilight, whose lingering lines
Fall faintly through the forest pines,
And with their dusky radiance lume
That lowly bed and lonely room,
Are filled, before her earnest gaze,
With dazzling dreams of bygone days.
They come—they come—a countless host,
Forms long unseen, and looks long lost,
And voices loved,—not *well* forgot,
  Awake, and seem, with accents dim,
Along the convent air to float;
That innocent air, that knoweth not
  A sound, except the vesper hymn.

VIII

'Tis past—that rush of hurried thought—
  The light within her deep, dark eye
  Was quenched by a wan tear, mistily,
Which trembled, though it lightened not,
As the cold peace, which all may share,
Soothed the last sorrow life could bear.
What grief was that—the broken heart
Loved to the last, and would not part?
What grief was that, whose calmness cold
By death alone could be consoled?
As the soft hand of coming rest
Bowed her fair head upon her breast,
As the last pulse decayed, to keep
Her heart from heaving in its sleep,

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The silence of her voice was broken,
As by a gasp of mental pain:
"May the faith thou hast forgotten
Bind thee with its broken chain."
The Abbess raised her, but in vain;
For, as the last faint word was spoken,
The silver cord was burst in twain,
The golden bowl was broken.

[1839, age 20.]

PART SECOND

I

The bell from Saint Cecilia's shrine
Had tolled the evening hour of prayer;
With tremulation far and fine,
It waked the purple air:
The peasant heard its distant beat,
And crossed his brow with reverence meet:
The maiden heard it sinking sweet
Within her jasmine bower,
And treading down, with silver feet,
Each pale and passioned flower:
The weary pilgrim, lowly lying
By Saint Cecilia's fountain grey,
Smiled to hear that curfew dying
Down the darkening day:
And where the white waves move and glisten
Along the river's reedy shore,
The lonely boatman stood to listen,
Leaning on his lazy oar.

II

On Saint Cecilia's vocal spire
The sun had cast his latest fire,
And flecked the west with many a fold
Of purple clouds o'er bars of gold.

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That vocal spire is all alone,
Albeit its many winding tone
Floats waste away—oh! far away,
Where bowers are bright and fields are gay;
That vocal spire is all alone,
  Amidst a secret wilderness,
With deep, free forest overgrown;
  And purple mountains, which the kiss
Of pale-lipped clouds doth fill with love
Of the bright heaven that burns above.
The woods around are wild and wide,
  And interwove with breezy motion;
Their bend before the tempest-tide
  Is like the surge of shoreless ocean;
Their summer voice is like the tread
Of trooping steeds to battle bred;
Their autumn voice is like the cry
Of a nation clothed with misery;
And the stillness of the winter's wood
Is as the hush of a multitude.

III

The banks beneath are flecked with light,
All through the clear and crystal night:
For as the blue heaven, rolling on,
Doth lift the stars up one by one;
Each, like a bright eye through its gates
  Of silken lashes dark and long,
With lustre fills, and penetrates,
  Those branches close and strong;
And nets of tangled radiance weaves
Between the many-twinkling leaves,
  And through each small and verdant chasm
Lets fall a flake of fire,
  Till every leaf, with voiceful spasm,
Wakes like a golden lyre.

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Swift, though still, the fiery thrill
Creeps along from spray to spray;
Light and music, mingled, fill
Every pulse of passioned breath,
Which, o'er the incense-sickened death
Of the faint flowers, that live by day,
Floats like a soul above the clay,
Whose beauty hath not passed away.

IV

Hark! hark! along the twisted roof
Of bough and leafage, tempest-proof,
There whispers, hushed and hollow,
The beating of a horse's hoof,
Which low faint echoes follow,
Down the deeply swarded floor
Of a forest aisle; the muffled tread,
Hissing where the leaves are dead,
Increases more and more;
And lo! between the leaves and light,
Up the avenue's narrow span,
There moves a blackness, shapèd like
The shadow of a man.
Nearer now, where through the maze
Cleave close the horizontal rays:
It moves,—a solitary knight,
Borne with undulation light
As is the windless walk of ocean,
On a black steed's Arabian grace,
Mighty of mien, and proud of pace,
But modulate of motion.
O'er breast and limb, from head to heel,
Fall flexile folds of sable steel;
Little the lightning of war could avail,
If it glanced on the strength of the folded mail.
The beaver bars his visage mask,
By outward bearings unrevealed;

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He bears no crest upon his casque,
No symbol on his shield.
Slowly, and with slackened rein,
Either in sorrow, or in pain,
Through the forest he paces on,
As our life does in a desolate dream,
When the heart and the limbs are as heavy as stone,
And the remembered tone and moony gleam
Of hushed voices, and dead eyes,
Draw us on the dim path of shadowy destinies.

V

The vesper chime hath ceased to beat,
And the hill echoes to repeat
The trembling of the argent bell.
What second sounding—dead and deep,
And cold of cadence—stirs the sleep
Of twilight with its sullen swell?
The knight drew bridle, as he heard
Its voice creep through his beaver barred,
Just where a cross of marble stood,
Grey in the shadow of the wood,
Whose youngest coppice, twined and torn,
Concealed its access worship-worn:
It might be chance—it might be art,
Or opportune, or unconfessed,
But from this cross there did depart
A pathway to the west;
By which a narrow glance was given,
To the high hills and highest heaven,
To the blue river's bended line,
And Saint Cecilia's lonely shrine.

VI

Blue, and baseless, and beautiful,
Did the boundless mountains bear
Their folded shadows into the golden air.
The comfortlessness of their chasms was full

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Of orient cloud, and undulating mist,
Which, where their silver cataracts hissed,
Quivered with panting colour. Far above
A lightning pulse of soundless fire did move,
In the blue heaven itself, and, snake-like, slid
Round peak, and precipice, and pyramid;
White lines of light along their crags alit,
And the cold lips of their chasms were wreathed with it,
Until they smiled with passionate fire; the sky
Hung over them with answering ecstasy:
Through its pale veins of cloud, like blushing blood,
From south to north the swift pulsation glowed
With infinite emotion; but it ceased
  In the far chambers of the dewy west.
There the weak day stood withering, like a spirit
  Which, in its dim departure, turns to bless
Their sorrow whom it leaveth to inherit
Their lonely lot of night and nothingness.
  Keen in its edge, against the farthest light,
The cold, calm earth its black horizon lifted,
  Though a faint vapour, which the winds had sifted
  Like thin sea-sand, in undulations white
And multitudinous, veiled the lower stars.
And over this there hung successive bars
Of crimson mist, which had no visible ending
  But in the eastern gloom; voiceless and still,
Illimitable in their arched extending,
  They kept their dwelling-place in heaven; the chill
Of the passing night-wind stirred them not; the ascending
  Of the keen summer moon was marked by them
Into successive steps; the plenitude
Of pensive light was kindled and subdued
  Alternate, as her crescent keel did stem
Those waves of currentless cloud; the diadem
  Of her companion planet near her, shed
Keen quenchless splendour down the drowsy air;
  Glowed as she glowed, and followed where she led,

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High up the hill of the night heaven, where
Thin threads of darkness, braided like black hair,
  Were in long trembling tresses interwoven.
The soft blue eyes of the superior deep
Looked through them, with the glance of those who cannot
    weep
  For sorrow. Here and there the veil was cloven,
By crossing of faint winds, whose wings did keep
Such cadence as the breath of dreamless sleep
Among the stars, and soothed, with strange delight,
The vain vacuity of the Infinite.

VII

Stiff as stone, and still as death,
  Stood the knight like one amazed,
And dropped his rein, and held his breath,
  So anxiously he gazed.
Oh! well might such a scene and sun
  Surprise the sudden sight;
And yet his mien was more of one
  In dread than in delight.
His glance was not on heaven or hill,
On cloud or lightning, swift or still,
  On azure earth or orient air;
But long his fixèd look did lie
On one bright line of western sky,—
  What saw he there?

VIII

On the brow of a lordly line
  Of chasm-divided crag, there stood
The walls of Saint Cecilia's shrine.
  Above the undulating wood
Broad basalt bulwarks, stern and stiff,
Ribbed, like black bones, the grisly cliff.
On the torn summit stretched away
The convent walls, tall, old, and grey;

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So strong their ancient size did seem,
  So stern their mountain-seat,
Well might the passing pilgrim deem
  Such desperate dwelling-place more meet
For soldier true, or baron bold,
For army's guard, or bandit's hold,
Than for the rest, deep, calm, and cold,
Of those whose tale of troublous life is told.

IX

The topmost tower rose narrow and tall,
O'er the broad mass of crag and wall;
Against the streak of western light
It raised its solitary height.
Just above, nor far aloof,
From the cross upon its roof,
Sat a silver star.
The low clouds drifting fast and far,
Gave, by their own mocking loss,
Motion to the star and cross.
Even the black tower was stirred below
  To join the dim, mysterious march,
The march so strangely slow.
  Near its top, an opening arch
Let through a passage of pale sky
Enclosed with stern captivity;
And in its hollow height there hung,
From a black bar, a brazen bell:
Its hugeness was traced clear and well
The slanting rays among.
Ever and anon it swung
Half way round its whirling wheel;
Back again, with rocking reel,
Lazily its length was flung,
Till brazen lip and beating tongue
Met once, with unrepeated peal,
Then paused;—until the winds could feel

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The weight of the wide sound, that clung
To their inmost spirit, like the appeal
Of startling memories, strangely strung,
That point to pain, and yet conceal.
Again with single sway it rung,
And the black tower beneath could feel
The undulating tremor steal
Through its old stones, with long shiver.
The wild woods felt it creep and quiver
Through their thick leaves and hushed air,
As fear creeps through a murderer's hair.
And the grey reeds beside the river,
In the moonlight meek and mild,
Moved like spears when war is wild.

X

And still the knight, like statue, stood
In the arched opening of the wood.
Slowly still the brazen bell
Marked its modulated knell;
Heavily, heavily, one by one,
The dull strokes gave their thunder tone.
So long the pause between was led
Ere one rose the last was dead—
Dead and lost by hollow and hill.
Again, again, it gathered still.
Ye who hear, peasant or peer,
By all you hope and all you fear,
Lowly now be heart and knee,
Meekly be your orison said
For the body in its agony,
And the spirit in its dread.

XI

Reverent as a cowlèd monk
The knight before the cross had sunk;

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Just as he bowed his helmless head,
Twice the bell struck faint and dead,
And ceased. Hill, valley, and winding shore
The rising roll received no more.
His lips were weak, his words were low,
A paleness came across his brow;
He started to his feet, in fear
Of something that he seemed to hear.
Was it the west wind that did feign
Articulation strange and vain?
Vainly with thine ear thou warrest:
  Lo! it comes, it comes again!
Through the dimly woven forest
  Comes the cry of one in pain—
"May the faith thou hast forgotten
  Bind thee with its broken chain."

[1839, age 20.]

PART THIRD

I

On grey Amboise's rocks and keep
The early shades of evening sleep,
And veils of mist, white-folded, fall
Round his long range of iron wall;
O'er the last line of withering light
The quick bats cut with angled flight;
And the low-breathing fawns that rest
  The twilight forest through,
Each, on his starry flank and stainless breast,
  Can feel the coolness of the dew
Soothing his sleep with heavenly weight.
Who are these who tread so late
Beyond Amboise's castle gate,
  And seek the garden shade?
The flowers are closed, the paths are dark,
Their marble guards look stern and stark,

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The birds are still, the leaves are stayed,
On windless bough, and sunless glade.
Ah! who are these that walk so late,
Beyond Amboise's castle gate?

II

Steep down the river's margin sink
  The gardens of Amboise,
And all their inmost thickets drink
  The wide low water-voice.
By many a bank whose blossoms shrink
  Amidst sweet herbage young and cold,
Through many an arch and avenue,
That noontide roofs with chequered blue,
  And paves with fluctuating gold,
Pierced by a thousand paths that guide
Grey echo-haunted rocks beside;
And into caves of cool recess,
Which ever-falling fountains dress
With emerald veils, dashed deep in dew;
And through dim thickets that subdue
  The crimson light of flowers afar,
As sweet rain doth the sunset, decked
  Themselves with many a living star,
Which music-wingèd bees detect
By the white rays and ceaseless odour shed
Over the scattered leaves that every day lays dead.

III

But who are these who pass so late
Beneath Amboise's echoing gate,
And seek the sweet path, poplar-shaded,
By breeze and moonbeam uninvaded?
They are two forms that move like one,
  Each to the music of the other's lips;

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The cold night thrilling with the tone
Of their low words,—the grey eclipse,
Cast from the tangled boughs above,
Their dark eyes penetrate with love;
Two forms,—one crested, calm, and proud,
Yet with bowed head and gentle ear inclining
To her who moves as in a sable cloud
Of her own waving hair—the star-flowers shining
Through its soft waves, like planets when they keep
Reflected watch beneath the sunless deep.

IV

Her brow is pure and pale, her eyes
Deep as the unfathomed sky;
Her lips, from which the sweet words rise
Like flames from incensed sacrifice,
Quiver with untold thoughts, that lie
Burning beneath their crimson glow,
As mute and deathless lightnings sleep
At sunset, where the dyes are deep
On Rosa's purple snow;[1]
She moves all beautiful and bright,
With little, in that form of light,
To set the seal of mortal birth,
Or own her earthy—of the earth,
Unless it be one strange, quick trace
That checks the glory of her face,—
A wayward meaning, dimly shed,
A shadow, scarcely felt ere fled;
A spot upon the brow, a spark
Under those eyes subdued and dark;
A low, short discord in the tone
Of music round her being thrown;

[1] [*Cf.* above, "The Exile of St. Helena," line 157, p. 51 *n.*]

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A mystery, more conceived than seen;
A wildness of the word and mien;
The sign of wilder work within,
Which may be sorrow—must be sin.

V

Slowly they moved, that knight and dame,
Where hanging thickets quench and tame
The river's flash and cry;
Mellowed among the leafage came
Its thunder voice—its flakes of flame
Drifted undisturbing by,
Sunk to a twilight and a sigh.
Their path was o'er the entangled rest
Of dark night-flowers that underneath
Their feet, as their dim bells were pressed,
Sent up warm pulses of soft breath.
Ranged in sepulchral ranks above,
Grey spires of shadowy cypress clove,
With many a shaft of sacred gloom,
The evening heavens' mysterious dome;
Slowly above their columns keen
Rolled on its path that starred serene;
A thousand fountains soundless flow,
With imaged azure, moved below;
And through the grove, and o'er the tide,
Pale forms appeared to watch, to glide,
O'er whose faint limbs the evening sky
Had cast like life its crimson dye;
Was it not life—so bright—so weak—
That flushed the bloodless brow and cheek,
And bade the lips of wreathèd stone
Kindle to all but breath and tone?
It moved—it heaved—that stainless breast!
Ah! what can break such marble rest?
It was a shade that passed—a shade
It was not bird nor bough that made,

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Nor dancing leaf, nor falling fruit;
For where it moves—that shadow, grey and chill,—
The birds are lulled—the leaves are mute—
The air is cold and still.

VI

Slowly they moved, that dame and knight,
As one by one the stars grew bright;
Fondly they moved—they did not mark
They had a follower strange and dark.
Just where the leaves their feet disturbed
Sunk from their whispering tune,
(It seemed beneath a fear that curbed
Their motion very soon)
A shadow fell upon them, cast
By a less visible form that passed
Between them and the moon.
Was it a fountain's falling shiver?
It moveth on—it will not stay—
Was it a mist-wreath of the river?
The mist hath melted all away,
And the risen moon is full and clear,
And the moving shadow is marked and near.
See! where the dead leaves felt it pass,
There are footsteps left on the bended grass—
Footsteps as of an armed heel,
Heavy with links of burning steel.

VII

Fondly they moved, that dame and knight,
By the gliding river's billow light;
Their lips were mute, their hands were given,
Their hearts did hardly stir;
The maid had raised her eyes to heaven,
But his were fallen on her.

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They did not heed, they did not fear
That follower strange that trod so near,
An armed form whose cloudy mail
Flashed as it moved with radiance pale;
So gleams the moonlit torrent through
Its glacier's deep transparent blue;
Quivering and keen, its steps of pride
Shook the sheathed lightning at its[1] side,
And waved its dark and drifted plume,
Like fires that haunt the unholy tomb,
Where, cursed with crime, the mouldering dead
Lie restless in their robes of lead.
What eye shall seek, what soul can trace
The deep death-horror of its face?—
The trackless livid smile that played
Beneath the casque's concealing shade,
The angered eye's unfathomed glare,
(So sleep the fountains of despair
Beneath the soul whose sins unseal
The wells of all it fears to feel—)
The sunk, unseen, all-seeing gloom,
Scarred with the ravage of the tomb,
The passions that made life their prey,
Fixed on the feature's last decay,
The pangs that made the human heart their slave,
Frozen on the changeless aspect of the grave?

VIII

And still it followed where they went,
That unregarding pair;
It kept on them its eyes intent,
And from their glance the sickened air
Shrank, as if tortured. Slow—how slow
The knight and lady trod!
You had heard their hearts beat just as loud
As their footsteps on the sod.

[1] ["His" in the ed. of 1891.]

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They paused at length in a leafless place
Where the moonlight shone on the maiden's face;
Still as an image of stone she stood,
Though the heave of her breath, and the beat of her blood
Murmured and mantled to and fro,
Like the billows that heave on a hill of snow
When the midnight winds are short and low.
The words of her lover came burning and deep,
And his hand was raised to the holy sky:
Can the lamps of the universe bear or keep
False witness or record on high?
He starts to his feet from the spot where he knelt,—
What voice hath he heard, what fear hath he felt?
His lips in their silence are bloodless and dry,
And the lovelight fails from his glazèd eye.

IX

Well might he quail, for full displayed
Before him rose that dreadful shade,
And o'er his mute and trembling trance
Waved its pale crest and quivering lance;
And traced, with pangs of sudden pain,
The form of words upon his brain:
"Thy vows are deep; but still thou bear'st the chain,
Cast on thee by a deeper—vowed in vain;
Thy love is fair; but fairer forms are laid,
Cold and forgotten, in the cypress shade;
Thy arm is strong; but arms of stronger trust
Repose unnerved, undreaded, in the dust;
Around thy lance shall bend the living brave,
Then, arm thee for the challenge of the grave."

X

The sound had ceased, the shape had passed away,
Silent the air, and pure the planet's ray.

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They stood beneath the lonely breathing night,
The lovely lady and the lofty knight;
He moved in shuddering silence by her side,
Or wild and wandering to her words replied,
Shunning her anxious eyes, on his that bent:
"Thou didst not see it,—'twas to me 'twas sent.
To me,—but why to me?—I knew it not,—
It was no dream,—it stood upon the spot
Where"—Then, with lighter tone and bitter smile,
"Nothing, beloved—a pang that did beguile
My spirit of its strength—a dream—a thought—
A fancy of the night." And though she sought
More reason of his dread, he heard her not,
For, mingling with those words of phantom fear,
There was another echo in his ear—
An under murmur deep and clear,
The faint low sob of one in pain:
"May the faith thou hast forgotten
Bind thee with its broken chain."

[1840, age 21.]

PART FOURTH

I

'Tis morn!—in clustered rays increased—
Exulting rays, that deeply drink
The starlight of the east,
And strew with crocus dyes the brink
Of those blue streams that pause and sink
Far underneath their heavenly strand—
Soft capes of vapour, ribbed like sand.
Along the Loire white sails are flashing,
Through stars of spray their dark oars dashing;
The rocks are reddening one by one,
The purple sandbanks flushed with sun,

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And crowned with fire on crags and keep,
Amboise! above thy lifted steep,
Far lightening o'er the subject vale,
Blaze thy broad range of ramparts pale!
Through distance azure as the sky,
That vale sends up its morning cry,
From countless leaves, that shaking shade
Its tangled paths of pillared glade,
And ceaseless fan, with quivering cool,
Each gentle stream and slumbrous pool,
That catch the leaf-song as they flow,
In tinkling echo pure and low,
Clear, deep, and moving, as the night,
And starred with orbs of lily light.
Nor are they leaves alone that sing,
  Nor waves alone that flow;
The leaves are lifted on the wing
  Of voices from below:
The waters keep, with shade subdued,
The image of a multitude—
  A merry crowd promiscuous met,
Of every age and heart united—
  Grey hairs with golden twined, and yet
With equal mien and eyes delighted;
With thoughts that mix, and hands that lock,
Behold they tread, with hurrying feet,
Along the thousand paths that meet
  Beneath Amboise's rock;
For there, upon the meadows wide,
That couch along the river-side,
  Are pitched a snowy flock
Of warrior tents, like clouds that rest,
Through champaigns of the quiet west,
When, far in distance, stretched serene,
The evening sky lies calm and green.
Amboise's lord must bear to-day
His love-gage through the rival fray;

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Through all the coasts of fiery France
His challenge shook the air,
That none could break so true a lance,
Nor for a dame so fair.

II

The lists are circled round with shields,
Like lily-leaves that lie
On forest pools in clustered fields
Of countless company.
But every buckler's bosses black
Dash the full beams of morning back,
In orbèd wave of welded lines,
With mingled blaze of crimson signs,
And light of lineage high:
As sounds that gush when thoughts are strong
But words are weak with tears,
Awoke, above the warrior throng,
The wind among the spears;
Afar in hollow surge they shook,
As reeds along some summer brook
Glancing beneath the July moon,
All bowed and touched in pleasant tune;
Their steely lightning passed and played
Alternate with the cloudy shade
Of crested casques, and flying flakes
Of horse-manes, twined like sable snakes
And misty plumes in darkness drifted,
And chargèd banners broadly lifted,
Purpling the air with storm-tints cast
Down through their undulation vast
Wide the billowy army strewing,
Like to flags of victory
From some wrecked armada's ruin,
Left to robe the sea.

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III

As the morning star, new risen
In a circle of calm sky,
Where the white clouds stand to listen
For the spherèd melody
Of her planetary path,
And her soft rays pierce the wrath
Of the night-storms stretched below,
Till they sink like wreaths of snow,
(Lighting heaven with their decay)
Into sudden silentness—
Throned above the stormy stress
Of that knightly host's array,
Goddess-formed, as one whom mortals
Need but gaze on to obey,
Distant seen, as through the portals
Of some temple grey,
The glory of a marble dream,
Kindling the eyes that gaze, the lips that pray—
One gentle lady sat, retiring, but supreme.

IV

Upon her brow there was no crown,
Upon her robe no gem;
Yet few were there who would not own
Her queen of earth, and them,[1]
Because that brow was crowned with light
As with a diadem,
And her quick thoughts, as they did rise,
Were in the deep change of her eyes
Traced one by one, as stars that start
Out of the orbèd peace of night,
Still drooping as they dart;

[1] [Misprinted "then" in the ed. of 1850.]

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And her sweet limbs shone heavenly bright,
Following, with undulation white,
The heaving of her heart.
High she sat, and all apart,
Meek of mien, with eyes declined,
Less like one of mortal mind
Than some changeless spirit shrined
In the memories of men,
Whom the passions of its kind
Cannot hurt nor move again.

V

High she sat, in meekness shaming
All of best and brightest there,
Till the herald's voice, proclaiming
Her the fairest of the fair,
Rang along the morning air;
And then she started, and that shade,
Which in the moonlit garden glade
Had marked her with its mortal stain,
Did pass upon her face again;
And in her eye a sudden flash
Came and was gone; but it were rash
To say if it were pride or pain;
And on her lips a smile, scarce worn,
Less, as it seemed, of joy than scorn,
Was with a strange, quick quivering mixed,
Which passed away, and left them fixed
In calm, persisting, colourless,
Perchance too perfect to be peace.
A moment more, and still serene
Returned, yet changed—her mood and mien;
What eye that traceless change could tell,
Slight, transient,—but unspeakable?
She sat, divine of soul and brow;
It passed,—and all is human now.

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VI

The multitude, with loud acclaim,
Caught up the lovely lady's name;
Thrice round the lists arose the cry;
But when it sank, and all the sky
Grew doubly silent by its loss,
A slow, strange murmur came across
The waves of the reposing air,—
A deep, soft voice, that everywhere
Arose at once, so lowly clear,
That each seemed in himself to hear
Alone; and, fixed with sweet surprise,
Did ask around him, with his eyes,
If 'twere not some dream-music dim
And false, that only rose for him.

VII

"Oh, lady Queen!—Oh, lady Queen!
  Fairest of all who tread
The soft earth's carpet green,
  Or breathe the blessings shed
  By the stars and tempest free;
Know thou, oh, lady Queen!
Earth hath borne, sun hath seen,
  Fairer than thee.

"The flush of beauty burneth
  In the palaces of earth,
But thy lifted spirit scorneth
  All match of mortal birth:
And the nymph of the hill,
  And the naiad of the sea,
Were of beauty quenched and chill,
  Beside thee!

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"Where the grey cypress shadows
Move onward with the moon
Round the low mounded meadows,
And the grave-stones, whitely hewn,
Gleam like camp-fires through the night;
There, in silence of long swoon,
In the horror of decay;
With the worm for their delight,
And the shroud for their array;
With the garland on their brow,
And the black cross by their side;
With the darkness for their beauty,
And the dust for their pride;
With the smile of baffled pain
On the cold lips half apart;
With the dimness on the brain,
And the peace upon the heart;—
Ever sunk in solemn shade,
Underneath the cypress tree,
Lady Queen, there are laid
Fairer than thee!"

VIII

It passed away, that melodie,
But none the minstrel there could see;
The lady sat still calm of thought,
Save that there rose a narrow spot
Of crimson on her cheek;
But then, the words were far and weak,—
Perchance she heard them not.
The crowd, still listening, feared to speak,
And only mixed in sympathy
Of pressing hand and wondering eye,
And left the lists all hushed and mute;
For every wind of heaven had sunk
To that aërial lute.
The ponderous banners, closed and shrunk,

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Down from their listless lances hung;
The windless plumes were feebly flung;
With lifted foot, the listening steed
  Did scarcely fret the fern;
And the challenger on his charmèd steed
  Sat statue-like and stern;
Till, mixed with martial trumpet-strain,
The herald's voice arose again,
Proclaiming that Amboise's lord
Dared, by the trial of the sword,
The bravest knights of France, to prove
Their fairer dame or truer love:—
And, ere the brazen blast had died,
That strange, sweet singing voice replied,
So wild, that every heart did keep
Its pulse to time the cadence deep.

IX

"Where the purple swords are swiftest,
  And the rage of death unreined,
Lord of battle, though thou liftest
  Crest unstooped, and shield unstained,
—Vain before thy footsteps fail
Useless spear and rended mail;
—Shuddering from thy glance and blow,
Earth's best armies sink like snow;
Know thou this: unmatched, unmet,
Night hath children mightier yet.

"The chapel vaults are deadly damp,
  Their air is breathless all;
The downy bats they clasp and cramp
  Their cold wings to the wall;
The bright-eyed eft, from cranny and cleft,
  Doth noiselessly pursue
The twining light of the death-worms white,
  In the pools of the earth-dew;

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The downy bat,—the death-worm white,
And the eft with its sable coil—
They are company good for a sworded knight,
In his rest from the battle-toil;
The sworded knight is sunk in rest,
With the cross-hilt in his hand;
But his arms are folded o'er his breast
As weak as ropes of sand.
His eyes are dark, his sword of wrath
Is impotent and dim;
Dark lord! in this thy victor path,
Remember him."

X

The sounds sunk deeply,—and were gone,
And, for a time, the quiet crowd
Hung on the long departing tone
Of wailing in the morning cloud,
In spirit wondering and beguiled;
Then turned, with steadfast gaze, to learn
What recked he, of such warning wild—
Amboise's champion stern.
But little to their sight betrayed
The visor bars and plumage shade;
The nearest thought he smiled,—
Yet more in bitterness than mirth,—
And held his eyes upon the earth
With thoughtful gaze, half sad, half keen,
As they would seek, beneath the screen
Of living turf and golden bloom,
The secrets of its under tomb.

XI

A moment more, with burning look,
High in the air his plume he shook,
And waved his lance as in disdain,
And struck his charger with the rein,

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And loosed the sword-hilt to his grasp,
And closed the visor's grisly clasp,
And all expectant sate and still;
The herald blew his summons shrill:
Keen answer rose from list and tent,
For France had there her bravest sent.
With hearts of steel, and eyes of flame,
Full armed the knightly concourse came;
They came like storms of heaven set free,
They came like surges of the sea,
  Resistless, dark and dense:
Like surges on a sable rock,
They fell with their own fiery shock,
  Dashed into impotence.
O'er each encounter's rush and gloom,
Like meteor rose Amboise's plume;
As stubble to his calm career,
Crashed from his breast the splintered spear;
Before his charge the war-horse reeled,
And bowed the helm, and sunk the shield,
And checked the heart, and failed the arm;
And still the heralds' loud alarm
  Disturbed the short delay—
"On, chevaliers! for fame, for love,—
For these dark eyes that burn above
  The field of your affray!"

XII

Six knights had fallen, the last in death,—
Deeply the challenger drew his breath.
The field was hushed,—the wind that rocked
  His standard staff grew light and low.
A seventh came not. He unlocked
  His visor-clasp, and raised his brow
To catch its coolness. Marvel not,
If it were pale with weariness,

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For fast that day his hand had wrought
  Its warrior work of victory;
Yet, one who loved him might have thought
  There was a trouble in his eye,
And that it turned in some distress
  Unto the quiet sky.
Indeed, that sky was strangely still,
And through the air unwonted chill
  Hung on the heat of noon;
Men spoke in whispers, and their words
Came brokenly, as if the chords
  Of their hearts were out of tune;
And deeper still, and yet more deep
The coldness of that heavy sleep
Came on the lulled air. And men saw,
In every glance, an answering awe
Meeting their own with doubtful change
Of expectation wild and strange.
Dread marvel was it thus to feel
The echoing earth, the trumpet peal,
The thundering hoof, the crashing steel,
  Cease to a pause so dead;
They heard the aspens' moaning shiver,
And the low tinkling of the river
  Upon its pebble bed.
The challenger's trump rang long and loud,
And the light upon his standard proud
  Grew indistinct and dun;
The challenger's trump rang long and loud,
And the shadow of a narrow cloud
  Came suddenly over the sun:

XIII

A narrow cloud of outline quaint,
  Much like a human hand;
And after it, with following faint,

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Came up a dull grey lengthening band
Of small cloud billows, like sea sand,
And then, out of the gaps of blue,
Left moveless in the sky, there grew
Long snaky knots of sable mist,
Which counter winds did vex and twist,
Knitted and loosed, and tossed and tore,
Like passive weeds on that sandy shore;
And these seemed with their touch to infect
The sweet white upper clouds, and checked
Their pacing on the heavenly floor,
And quenched the light, which was to them
As blood and life, singing the while
A fitful requiem,
Until the hues of each cloud isle
Sank into one vast veil of dread,
Coping the heaven as if with lead;
With dragged pale edges here and there,
Through which the noon's transparent glare
Fell with a dusky red.
And all the summer voices sank
To let that darkness pass;
The weeds were quiet on the bank,
The cricket in the grass;
The merry birds, the buzzing flies,
The leaves of many lips,
Did make their songs a sacrifice
Unto the noon eclipse.

XIV

The challenger's trump rang long and loud—
Hark, as its notes decay!
Was it out of the earth—or up in the cloud?—
Or an echo far away?
Soft it came, and none knew whence—
Deep, melodious, and intense,
So lightly breathed, so wildly blown,

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Distant it seemed—yet everywhere
Possessing all the infinite air—
  One quivering trumpet-tone!
With slow increase of gathering sway,
Louder along the wind it lay;
It shook the woods, it pressed the wave,
The guarding rocks through chasm and cave
Roared in their fierce reply.
  It rose, and o'er the lists at length
  Crashed into full tempestuous strength,
Shook, through its storm-tried turrets high,
  Amboise's mountain home,
And the broad thunder-vaulted sky
  Clanged like a brazen dome.

XV

Unchanged, unchilled in heart and eye,
The challenger heard that dread reply;
His head was bowed upon his breast,
And on the darkness in the west
His glance dwelt patiently;
Out of that western gloom there came
A small white vapour, shaped like flame,
Unscattering, and on constant wing
Rode lonely, like a living thing,
Upon its stormy path; it grew,
And gathered as it onward drew—
It paused above the lists, a roof
Inwoven with a lightning woof
Of undulating fire, whose trace,
Like corpse-fire on a human face,
Was mixed of light and death; it sank
Slowly; the wild war-horses shrank
  Tame from the nearing flash; their eyes
Glared the blue terror back: it shone
On the broad spears, like wavering wan
  Of unaccepted sacrifice.

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Down to the earth the smoke-cloud rolled—
Pale-shadowed through its sulphurous fold,
Banner and armour, spear and plume,
Gleamed like a vision of the tomb.
One form alone was all of gloom—
In deep and dusky arms arrayed,
Changeless alike through flash and shade,
Sudden within the barrier gate
Behold, the Seventh champion sate!
He waved his hand—he stooped his lance—
The challenger started from his trance;—
He plunged his spur—he loosed his rein—
A flash—a groan—a woman's cry—
And up to the receiving sky
The white cloud rose again!

XVI

The white cloud rose—the white cloud fled—
The peace of heaven returned in dew,
And soft and far the noontide shed
Its holiness of blue.
The rock, the earth, the wave, the brake
Rejoiced beneath that sweet succeeding;
No sun nor sound can warm or wake
One human heart's unheeding.
Stretched on the dark earth's bosom, chill,
Amboise's lord lay stark and still.
The heralds raised[1] him, but to mark
The last light leave his eyeballs dark—
The last blood dwindle on his cheek—
They turned; a murmur wild and weak
Passed on the air, in passion broken,
The faint low sob of one in pain—
"Lo! the faith thou hast forgotten
Binds thee with its broken chain!"

[1841, age 22.]

[1] ["Raise" in the ed. of 1891.]

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PART FIFTH

I

The mists, that mark the day's decline,
  Have cooled and lulled the purple air;
The bell, from Saint Cecilia's shrine,
  Hath tolled the evening hour of prayer;
With folded veil, and eyes that shed
Faint rays along the stones they tread,
And bosom stooped, and step subdued
Came forth that ancient sisterhood;
Each bearing on her lips along
Part of the surge of a low song,—
A wailing requiem, wildly mixed
  With suppliant cry, how weak to win,
From home so far—from fate so fixed,
  A Spirit dead in sin!
Yet yearly must they meet, and pray
  For her who died—how long ago!
  How long—'twere only Love could know;
And she, ere her departing day,
Had watched the last of Love's decay;
Had felt upon her fading cheek
  None but a stranger's sighs;
Had none but stranger souls to seek
  Her death-thoughts in her eyes;
Had none to guard her couch of clay,
  Or trim her funeral stone,
Save those who, when she passed away,
  Felt not the more alone.

II

And years had seen that narrow spot
Of death-sod levelled and forgot,
Ere question came of record kept,
Or how she died—or where she slept.

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The night was wild, the moon was late—
A lady sought the convent gate;
The midnight chill was on her breast,
  The dew was on her hair,
And in her eye there was unrest,
  And on her brow, despair.
She came to seek the face, she said,
  Of one deep injured. One by one
The gentle sisters came, and shed
  The meekness of their looks upon
Her troubled watch. "I know them not,
  I know them not," she murmured still:
"Are then her face—her form forgot?"
  "Alas! we lose not when we will
  The thoughts of an accomplished ill;
The image of our love may fade,
But what can quench a victim's shade?

III

"She comes not yet. She will not come.
  I seek her chamber;" and she rose
With a quick start of grief, which some
  Would have restrained; but the repose
Of her pale brow rebuked them. "Back,"
  She cried, "the path,—the place, I know,—
Follow me not—though broad and black
The night lies on that lonely track,
There moves for ever by my side
A darker spirit for my guide;
A broader curse—a wilder woe,
Must gird my footsteps as I go."

IV

Sternly she spoke, and shuddering, sought
The cloister arches, marble-wrought,
That send, through many a trembling shaft,
The deep wind's full, melodious draught,

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Round the low space of billowy turf,
Where funeral roses flash like surf,
O'er those who share the convent grave,
Laid each beneath her own green wave.

V

From stone to stone she past, and spelt
The letters with her fingers felt;
The stains of time are drooped across
Those mouldering names, obscure with moss;
The hearts where once they deeply dwelt,
With music's power to move and melt,
Are stampless too—the fondest few
Have scarcely kept a trace more true.

VI

She paused at length beside a girth
Of osiers overgrown and old;
And with her eyes fixed on the earth,
Spoke slowly and from lips as cold
As ever met the burial mould.

VII

"I have not come to ask for peace
From thee, thou unforgiving clay!
The pangs that pass—the throbs that cease
From such as thou, in their decay,
Bequeath them that repose of wrath
So dark of heart, so dull of ear,
That bloodless strength of sworded sloth,
That shows not mercy, knows not fear,
And keeps its death-smile of disdain
Alike for pity, as for pain.
But, galled by many a ghastly link,
That bound and brought my soul to thee,
I come to bid thy vengeance drink
The wine of this my misery.

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Look on me as perchance the dead
Can look, through soul and spirit spread
Before thee; go thou forth, and tread
The lone fields of my life, and see
  Those dark large flocks of restless pangs
They pasture, and the thoughts of thee,
  That shepherd them, and teach their fangs
To eat the green, and guide their feet
To trample where the banks are sweet,
And judge betwixt us, which is best,
My sleepless torture, or thy rest;
And which the worthier to be wept,
The fate I caused, or that I kept.
I tell thee, that my steps must stain
With more than blood, their path of pain;
And I would fold my weary feet
More gladly in thy winding sheet,
And wrap my bosom in thy shroud,
And dash thy darkness on the crowd
  Of terrors in my sight, and sheathe
Mine ears from their confusion loud,
  And cool my brain with cypress wreath
More gladly from its pulse of blood,
Than ever bride with orange bud
Clouded her moony brow. Alas!
This osier fence I must not pass.
Wilt thou not thank me, that I dare
  To feel the beams and drink the breath
That curse me out of Heaven, nor share
The cup that quenches human care,
  The Sacrament of death;
But yield thee this, thy living prey
Of erring soul and tortured clay,
To feed thee, when thou com'st to keep
Thy watch of wrath around my sleep,
Or turn the shafts of daylight dim,
With faded breast and frozen limb?

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VIII

"Yet come, and be, as thou hast been,
Companion ceaseless—not unseen,
Though gloomed the veil of flesh between
Mine eyes and thine, and fast and rife
Around me flashed the forms of life:
I knew them by their change—for one
I did not lose, I could not shun,
Through laughing crowd, and lighted room,
Through listed field, and battle's gloom,
Through all the shapes and sounds that press
The Path, or wake the Wilderness:
E'en when He came, mine eyes to fill,
Whom Love saw solitary still,
For ever, shadowy by my side,
I heard thee murmur, watched thee glide;
But what shall now thy purpose bar?
The laughing crowd is scattered far,
The lighted hall is left forlorn,
The listed field is white with corn,
And he, beneath whose voice and brow
I could forget thee, is—as thou."

IX

She spoke, she rose, and, from that hour,
The peasant groups that pause beside
The chapel walls at eventide,
To catch the notes of chord and song
That unseen fingers form, and lips prolong,
Have heard a voice of deeper power,
Of wilder swell, and purer fall,
More sad, more modulate, than all.
It is not keen, it is not loud,
But ever heard alone,

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As winds that touch on chords of cloud
  Across the heavenly zone,
Then chiefly heard, when drooped and drowned
In strength of sorrow, more than sound;
That low, articulated rush
  Of swift, but secret passion, breaking
From sob to song, from gasp to gush;
Then failing to that deadly hush,
  That only knows the wilder waking—
That deep, prolonged, and dream-like swell,
So full that rose—so faint that fell,
So sad—so tremulously clear—
So checked with something worse than fear.
Whose can they be?
Go, ask the midnight stars, that see
The secrets of her sleepless cell;
For none but God and they can tell
What thoughts and deeds of darkened choice
Gave horror to that burning voice—
  That voice, unheard save thus, untaught
The words of penitence or prayer;
  The grey confessor knows it not;
The chapel echoes only bear
Its burst and burthen of despair;
And pity's voice hath rude reply,
From darkened brow and downcast eye,
That quench the question, kind or rash,
With rapid shade and reddening flash;
Or, worse, with the regardless trance
Of sealèd ear, and sightless glance,—
That fearful glance, so large and bright,
That dwells so long, with heed so light,
When, far within, its fancy lies,
Nor movement marks, nor ray replies,
Nor kindling dawn, nor holy dew
Reward the words that soothe or sue.

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X

Restless she moves; beneath her veil
That writhing brow is sunk and shaded;
Its touch is cold—its veins are pale—
Its crown is lost—its lustre faded;
Yet lofty still, though scarcely bright,
Its glory burns beneath the blight
Of wasting thought, and withering crime,
And curse of torture and of time;
Of pangs—of pride, endured—degraded—
Of guilt unchecked, and grief unaided:
Her sable hair is slightly braided;
Warm, like south wind, its foldings float
Round her soft hands and marble throat;
How passive these, how pulseless this,
That love should lift, and life should warm!
Ah! where the kindness, or the kiss,
Can break their dead and drooping charm?
Perchance they were not always so:
That breast hath sometimes movement deep,
Timed like the sea, that surges slow
Where storms have trodden long ago;
And sometimes, from their listless sleep,
Those hands are harshly writhed and knit,
As grasping what their frenzied fit
Deemed peace to crush, or death to quit.
And then the sisters shrink aside;
They know the words that others hear
Of grace, or gloom—to charm, or chide,
Fall on her inattentive ear
As falls the snowflake on the rock,
That feels no chill, and knows no shock;
Nor dare they mingle in her mood,
So dark, and dimly understood;
And better so, if, as they say,
'Tis something worse than solitude:

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For some have marked, when that dismay
Had seemed to snatch her soul away,
That in her eye's unquietness
There shone more terror than distress;
And deemed they heard, when, soft and dead,
By night they watched her sleepless tread,
Strange words addressed, beneath her breath,
As if to one who heard in death,
And, in the night-wind's sound and sigh,
Imagined accents of reply.

. . . . . .

XI

The sun is on his western march,
His rays are red on shaft and arch;
With hues of hope their softness dyes
The image with the lifted eyes,*
Where listening still, with trancèd smile,
Cecilia lights the glimmering aisle;
So calm the beams that flushed her rest
Of ardent brow, and virgin breast,
Whose chill they pierced, but not profaned,
And seemed to stir what scarce they stained,

* I was thinking of the St. Cecilia of Raphael at Bologna, turned into marble—were it possible, where so much depends on the entranced darkness of the eyes. The shrine of St. Cecilia is altogether imaginary; she is not a favourite saint in matters of dedication. I don't know why.[1]

[1] [Ruskin had been at Bologna in 1841. The following entry is from his diary:—
"*Bologna, May* 3.—Went to Academia and got into the room entirely by myself and sat for an hour before the St. Cecilia. Whether it was the perfect quiet of the place, or whether I was in a particular tune, I never felt so much of reality in the creations of the great painters or so much disposition to enter into their enthusiasm. . . . The face of St. Cecilia kept me looking into its lifted eyes till it grew twilight."
Shelley also had been deeply moved at Bologna by the St. Cecilia. "It is of the inspired and ideal kind," he wrote, "and seems to have been conceived and executed in a similar state of feeling to that which produced among the ancients those perfect specimens of poetry and sculpture which are the baffling models of succeeding generations" (*Essays, Letters from Abroad, etc.*, 1840, ii. 158). But in Ruskin's case the impression produced by Raphael's picture at first sight did not remain: see *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. pt. iii. sec. i. ch. xv. § 6, sec. ii. ch. v. § 11; vol. iii. ch. i. § 19.]

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So warm the life, so pure the ray:
Such she had stood, ere snatched from clay,
When sank the tones of sun and sphere,
Deep melting on her mortal ear;
And angels stooped, with fond control,
To write the rapture on her soul.

XII

Two sisters, at the statue's feet,
Paused in the altar's arched retreat,
As risen but now from earnest prayer;
One aged and grey—one passing fair;
In changeful gush of breath and blood,
Mute for a time the younger stood;
Then raised her head and spoke: the flow
Of sound was measured, stern, and slow:—

XIII

"Mother! thou sayest she died in strife
Of heavenly wrath, and human woe;
For me, there is not that in life
Whose loss could ask, or love could owe,
As much of pang as now I show;
But that the book which angels write
Within men's spirits day by day,
That diary of judgment-light,
That cannot pass away,
Which, with cold ear and glazing eye,
Men hear and read before they die,
Is open now before me set;
Its drifting leaves are red and wet
With blood, and fire, and yet, methought
Its words were music, were they not
Written in darkness.
I confess!
Say'st thou? The sea shall yield its dead,
Perchance my spirit its distress;

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Yet there are paths of human dread,
That none but God should trace, or tread;
Men judge by a degraded law;
With Him, I fear not: He who gave
The sceptre to the passion, saw
The sorrow of the slave.
He made me, not as others are,
Who dwell, like willows by a brook,
That see the shadow of one star
For ever with serenest look
Lighting their leaves,—that only hear
Their sun-stirred boughs sing soft and clear,
And only live, by consciousness
Of waves that feed, and winds that bless.
Me—rooted on a lonely rock,
Amidst the rush of mountain rivers,
He doomed to bear the sound and shock
Of shafts that rend and storms that rock,
The frost that blasts, and flash that shivers;
And I am desolate and sunk,
A lifeless wreck—a leafless trunk,
Smitten with plagues, and seared with sin,
And black with rottenness within,
But conscious of the holier will
That saved me long, and strengthens still.

XIV

"Mine eyes are dim, they scarce can trace
The rays that pierce this lonely place;
But deep within their darkness dwell
A thousand thoughts they knew—too well.
Those orbèd towers obscure and vast,*
That light the Loire with sunset last;

* The circular tower, seen to the right, in the engraving of Amboise, is so large as to admit of a spiral ascent in its interior, which two horsemen may ride up abreast. The chapel, which crowns the precipice, though small, is one of the loveliest bits of rich detail in France. In reality it is terminated by a

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Those fretted groups of shaft and spire,
That crest Amboise's cliff with fire,
When, far beneath, in moonlight fail
The winds that shook the pausing sail;
The panes that tint with dyes divine
The altar of St. Hubert's shrine;
The very stone on which I knelt,
  When youth was pure upon my brow,
Though word I prayed, or wish I felt
  I scarce remember now.
Methought that there I bowed to bless
  A warrior's sword—a wanderer's way:
Ah! nearer now, the knee would press
  The heart for which the lips would pray.
The thoughts were meek, the words were low—
  I deemed them free from sinful stain;
It might be so. I only know
  These were unheard, and those were vain.

XV

"That stone is raised;—where once it lay
Is built a tomb of marble grey:*
Asleep within the sculptured veil
Seems laid a knight in linkèd mail;
Obscurely laid in powerless rest,
  The latest of his line;
Upon his casque he bears no crest,
  Upon his shield no sign.

small wooden spire, which I have not represented, as it destroyed the grandeur of the outline. It is dedicated to St. Hubert, a grotesque piece of carving above the entrance representing his *rencontre* with the sacred stag.[1]

* There is no such tomb *now* in existence, the chapel being circular, and unbroken in design; in fact, I have my doubts whether there ever was anything of the kind, the lady being slightly too vague in her assertions to deserve unqualified credit.

[1] ["The Chapel of St. Hubert has additional interest to the traveller as the burial-place of Leonardo da Vinci" (*Editor's Note*, 1891); but see *Leonardo da Vinci*, by Eugène Muntz, Eng. ed., 1898, ii. 223.]

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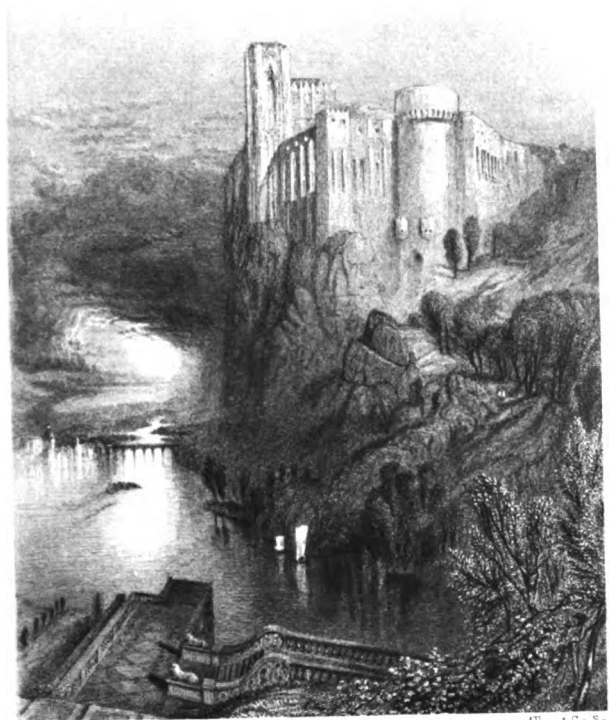

Drawn by J Ruskin Allen & Co Sc

AMBOISE.

1841.

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Amboise.
1841.

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I've seen the day when through the blue
Of broadest heaven his banner flew,
And armies watched through farthest fight
The stainless symbol's stormy light
Wave like an angel's wing.
Ah! now a scorned and scathèd thing,
Its silken folds the worm shall fret,
The clay shall soil, the dew shall wet,
Where sleeps the sword that once could save,
And droops the arm that bore;
Its hues must gird a nameless grave;
Nor wind shall wake, nor lance shall wave,
Nor glory gild it more:
For he is fallen—oh! ask not how,
Or ask the angels that unlock
The inmost grave's sepulchral rock;
I could have told thee once, but now
'Tis madness in me all, and thou
Wouldst deem it so, if I should speak.
And I am glad my brain is weak;—
Ah! this is yet its only wrong,
To know too well—to feel too long.

XVI

"But I remember how he lay
When the rushing crowd were all away:
And how I called, with that low cry
He never heard without reply;
And how there came no sound nor sign,
And the feel of his dead lips on mine;
And when they came to comfort me,
I laughed, because they could not see
The stain of blood, or print of lance,
To write the tomb upon the trance.
I saw, what they had heeded not,
Above his heart a small black spot;

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Ah, woe! I knew how deep within
That stamp of death, that seal of sin,
Had struck with mortal agony
The heart so false—to all but me.

XVII

"Mother! methinks my soul can say
It loved as well as woman's may;
And what I *would have given*, to gain
The answering love, to count were vain;
I know not,—what I *gave* I know[1]—
My hope on high, my all below.
But hope and height of earth and heaven,
Or highest sphere to angels given,
Would I surrender, and take up
The horror of this cross and cup
I bear and drink, to win the thought
That I had failed in what I sought;
Alas! I won—rejoiced to win
The love whose every look was sin;
Whose every dimly worded breath
Was but the distant bell of death
For her who heard, for him who spoke.
Ah! though those hours were swift and few,
The guilt they bore, the vow they broke,
Time cannot punish—nor renew.

XVIII

"They told me, long ago, that thou
Hadst seen, beneath this very shade
Of mouldering stone that wraps us now,
The death of her whom he betrayed.
Thine eyes are wet with memory,—
In truth 'tis fearful sight to see

[1] [*Cf.* in Rossetti's *The Bride's Prelude* (1847–9): "I knew not, but I know I gave."]

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E'en the last sands of sorrow run,
Though the fierce work of death be done,
And the worst woe that fate can will
Bids but its victim to be still.
But I beheld the darker years
  That first oppressed her beauty's bloom;
The sickening heart and silent tears
  That asked and eyed her early tomb;
  I watched the deepening of her doom,
As, pulse by pulse, and day by day,
The crimson life-tint waned away;
And timed her bosom's quickening beat,
  That hastened only to be mute,
And the short tones, each day more sweet,
  That made her lips like an Eolian lute,
When winds are saddest; and I saw
The kindling of the unearthly awe
That touched those lips with frozen light,
The smile, so bitter, yet so bright,
Which grief, that sculptured, seals its own,
Which looks like life, but stays like stone;
Which checks with fear the charm it gives,
And loveliest burns when least it lives,—
All this I saw. Thou canst not guess
How woman may be merciless.
One word from me had rent apart
The chains that chafed her dying heart:
Closer I clasped the links of care,
And learned to pity—not to spare.

XIX

"She might have been avenged; for when
Her woe was aidless among men,
And tooth of scorn and brand of shame
Had seared her spirit, soiled her name,
There came a stranger to her side,
  Or—if a friend, forgotten long,

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Nor blood be shed,* nor prayer be made,—
The cup were death—the words were sin,
To judge the soul they could not win,
And fall in torture o'er the grave
Of one they could not wash, nor save."

. . . . . .

XXII

The vesper beads are told and slipped,
The chant has sunk by choir and crypt.
That circle dark—they rise not yet;
With downcast eyes, and lashes wet,
They linger, bowed and low;
They must not part before they pray
For her who left them on this day
How many years ago!

XXIII

They knelt within the marble screen,
Black-robed and moveless, hardly seen,
Save by their shades that sometimes shook
Along the quiet floor,
Like leaf-shades on a waveless brook
When the wind walks by the shore.
The altar lights that burned between,
Were seven small fire-shafts, white and keen,
Intense and motionless.
They did not shake for breeze nor breath,
They did not change, nor sink, nor shiver;
They burned as burn the barbs of death
At rest within their angel's quiver.
From lip to lip, in chorus kept,
The sad, sepulchral music swept,
While *one* sweet voice unceasing led:
Were there but mercy for the dead,

* In the sacrifice of the Mass the priest is said to offer Christ for the quick and dead.

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Such prayer had power to soothe—to save—
Ay! even beneath the binding grave;[1]
So pure the springs of faith that fill
  The spirit's fount, at last unsealed,
A corpse's ear, an angel's will,
  That voice might wake, or wield.
Keener it rose, and wilder yet;
The lifeless flowers that wreathe and fret
Column and arch with garlands white,
Drank the deep fall of its delight,
Like purple rain * at evening shed
  On Sestri's cedar-darkened shore,
When all her sunlit waves lie dead,
And, far along the mountains fled,
  Her clouds forget the gloom they wore,
Till winding vale and pasture low
Pant underneath their gush and glow;
So sank, so swept, on earth and air,
That single voice of passioned prayer.
The hollow tombs gave back the tone,
The roof's grey shafts of stalwart stone
Quivered like chords; the keen night-blast
Grew tame beneath the sound. 'Tis past:
That failing cry—how feebly flung!
What charm is laid on her who sung?
  Slowly she rose—her eyes were fixed

* I never saw such a thing but once, on the mountains of Sestri, in the Gulf of Genoa. The whole western half of the sky was one intense amber colour, the air crystalline and cloudless, the other half grey with drifting showers. At the instant of sunset, the whole mass of *rain* turned of a deep rose-colour, the consequent rainbow being not varied with the seven colours, but one broad belt of paler rose; the other tints being so delicate as to be overwhelmed by the crimson of the rain.[2]

[1] [In J. J. Ruskin's MS. copy of the conclusion of Part V. the three lines, "Were there . . . grave," do not appear; it reads, instead of them, "Well might it soothe and save the dead." From correspondence between Ruskin and Harrison it appears that this was objected to as unorthodox, and Ruskin gave Harrison some alternative emendations from which the three lines in the text were adopted.]

[2] [*Cf.* above, "The Exile of St. Helena," line 111, p. 50 *n.*]

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On the void, penetrable air;
And in their glance was gladness mixed
With terror and an under glare:
What human soul shall seize or share
The thoughts it might avow?
It might have been—ah! is it now—
Devotion?—or despair?

XXIV

With steps whose short white flashes keep
Beneath the shade of her loose hair,
With measured pace, as one in sleep
Who heareth music in the air,
She left the sisters' circle deep.
Their anxious eyes of troubled thought
Dwelt on her, but she heeded not;
Fear-struck and breathless as they gazed,
Before her steps their ranks divided;
Her hand was given—her face was raised
As if to one who watched and guided.
Her form emerges from the shade:
Lo! she will cross, where full displayed
Against the altar light 'tis thrown;
She crosses now—but not alone.
Who leads her?. Lo! the sisters shrink
Back from that guide with limbs that sink,
And eyes that glaze, and lips that blench;
For, seen where broad the beams were cast
By what it dimmed, but did not quench,
A dark, veiled form there passed—
Veiled with the nun's black robe, that shed
Faint shade around its soundless tread;
Moveless and mute the folds that fell,
Nor touch can change, nor breeze repel.
Deep to the earth its head was bowed,
Its face was bound with the white shroud;

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One hand upon its bosom pressed—
One seemed to lead its mortal guest:
The hand it held lay bright and bare,
Cold as itself, and deadly fair.
What oath hath bound the fatal troth
Whose horror seems to seal them both?—
Each powerless in the grasp they give,
This to release, and that to live.

XXV

Like sister sails, that drift by night
  Together on the deep,
Seen only where they cross the light
  That pathless waves must pathlike keep
  From fisher's signal fire, or pharos steep:

XXVI

Like two thin wreaths that autumn dew
  Hath framed of equal pacèd cloud,
  Whose shapes the hollow night can shroud,
    Until they cross some caverned place
  Of moon-illumined blue,
    That live an instant, but must trace
Their onward way, to waste and wane
Within the sightless gloom again,
Where, scattered from their heavenly pride
Nor star nor storm shall gild or guide,—
So shape and shadow, side by side,
The consecrated light had crossed.
Beneath the aisle an instant lost,
  Behold! again they glide
Where yonder moonlit arch is bent
Above the marble steps' descent,—
Those ancient steps, so steep and worn,
  Though none descend, unless it be

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Bearing, or borne, to sleep, or mourn,
  The faithful, or the free.
The shade yon bending cypress cast,
  Stirred by the weak and tremulous air,
Kept back the moonlight as they passed.
  The rays returned: they were not there.
Who follows? Watching still, to mark
If aught returned—(but all was dark)
Down to the gate, by two and three,
The sisters crept, how fearfully!
They only saw, when there they came,
Two wandering tongues of waving flame
O'er the white stones, confusedly strewed
Across the field of solitude.

[1842, age 23.]

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[1840][1]

THE TWO PATHS[2]

I

THE paths of life are rudely laid
  Beneath the blaze of burning skies;
Level and cool, in cloistered shade,
  The church's pavement lies.
Along the sunless forest glade
  Its gnarlèd roots are coiled like crime;
Where glows the grass with freshening blade,
  Thine eyes may track the serpent's slime;
But there thy steps are unbetrayed,—
  The serpent waits a surer time.

II

The fires of earth are fiercely blent,
  Its suns arise with scorching glow;
The church's light hath soft descent,
  And hues like God's own bow.
The brows of men are darkly bent,
  Their lips are wreathed with scorn and guile;

[1] [In 1840 Ruskin's health broke down; he was threatened with consumptive symptoms, and had to leave Oxford (see Vol. I. p. xxxviii.). He had seen Adèle for the last time on December 28, 1839; she was married on March 12, 1840. Ruskin said his "Farewell" in verse; see the piece so entitled (p. 193) and "Agonia" (p. 207). "The Tears of Psammenitus" was written as a relief from the painful excitement thus occasioned. The only other pieces of the year were a few written more or less to order for *Friendship's Offering*.]

[2] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1841, pp. 73-74. Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 217–218; *The Home Story-Book in Prose and Verse*, 1851; American edition, pp. 181–183; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 253–254. There is no MS. extant. Written in 1840 to accompany a plate entitled "Morning Devotion," engraved by F. Bacon from a painting by G. Smyth. It represents an elderly lady and a boy kneeling at a *prie-dieu*; see letter from Ruskin cited on p. 205. *The Two Paths* was afterwards the title of one of Ruskin's books.]

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But pure, and pale, and innocent,
The looks that light the marble aisle—
From angel eyes, in love intent,
And lips of everlasting smile.

III

Lady, the fields of earth are wide,
And tempt an infant's foot to stray:
Oh! lead thy loved one's steps aside,
Where the white altar lights his way.
Around his path shall glance and glide
A thousand shadows false and wild;
Oh! lead him to that surer Guide
Than sire serene, or mother mild,
Whose Childhood quelled the age of pride—
Whose Godhead called the little child.

IV

So, when thy breast of love untold,
That warmed his sleep of infancy,
Shall only make the marble cold
Beneath his aged knee,
From its steep throne of heavenly gold,
Thy soul shall stoop to see
His grief, that cannot be controlled,
Turning to God from thee—
Cleaving with prayer the cloudy fold
That veils the Sanctuary.

[Age 21.]

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THE OLD WATER-WHEEL [1]

It lies beside the river; where its marge
Is black with many an old and oarless barge;
And yeasty filth, and leafage wild and rank
Stagnate and batten by the crumbling bank.[2]

Once, slow revolving by the industrious mill,
It murmured, only on the Sabbath still;
And evening winds its pulse-like beating bore
Down the soft vale, and by the winding shore.

Sparkling around its orbèd motion flew,
With quick, fresh fall, the drops of dashing dew;
Through noon-tide heat that gentle rain was flung,
And verdant round the summer herbage sprung.

Now dancing light and sounding motion cease,
In these dark hours of cold continual peace;
Through its black bars the unbroken moonlight flows,
And dry winds howl about its long repose;

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1841, pp. 107–108, signed "K. Φ." *i.e.* *κατὰ φύσιν*, his *nom-de-plume* in writing *The Poetry of Architecture*. Reprinted in *The English Helicon* (edited by T. K. Hervey), 1841, pp. 56–57 (signed J. R., but in the list of contents the full name "John Ruskin" given); *Poems*, 1850, pp. 219–220; *Life and Teaching of John Ruskin*, by J. Marshall Mather, 1883, p. 28 (2nd edition, 1884, p. 30); and American edition, pp. 184–185; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 255–256. In the American edition the frontispiece, entitled "The Old Water-Wheel," shows a rustic scene. It was not by Ruskin. In sending the MS. to W. H. Harrison, Ruskin wrote (March 22, 1840): "If you walk over Vauxhall Bridge from your house, and pay some attention to the waste pieces of ground on your left hand as you proceed towards Pimlico, you will observe a very large, ugly, black water-wheel among some copper boilers and wherry bottoms, which is the subject of the lines."]

[2] [In the MS. sent to Harrison this line reads, "Stagnate and batten by the lonely bank." But "I don't see," wrote the author in a postscript to the letter just cited, "how the bank can be lonely if the wheel be 'among the hum of men.' But I don't know what to put in and am in a hurry."]

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And mouldering lichens creep, and mosses grey
Cling round its arms in gradual decay,
Amidst the hum of men—which doth not suit
That shadowy circle, motionless, and mute.

So, by the sleep of many a human heart,
The crowd of men may bear their busy part,
Where withered, or forgotten, or subdued,
Its noisy passions have left solitude:

Ah! little can they trace the hidden truth!
What waves have moved it in the vale of youth!
And little can its broken chords avow
How once they sounded. All is silent now.

[Age 21.]

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THE TEARS OF PSAMMENITUS[1]

Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, made war on Psammenitus of Egypt, and deposed him. His sons were sentenced to death, his daughters to slavery. He saw his children pass to death and to dishonour without apparent emotion, but *wept* on observing a noble, who had been his companion, ask alms of the Persians. Cambyses sent to inquire the reason of his conduct. The substance of his reply was as follows:—

SAY ye I wept? I do not know:—
  There came a sound across my brain,
Which was familiar long ago;
  And, through the hot and crimson stain
That floods the earth and chokes the air,
I saw the waving of white hair—
The palsy of an aged brow;
I should have known it once, but now
One desperate hour hath dashed away
The memory of my kingly day.
Mute, weak, unable to deliver
  That bowed distress of passion pale,
I saw that forehead's tortured quiver,
  And watched the weary footstep fail,

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1841, pp. 37–45, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." The editor in a preface to the volume "gratefully reiterated his thanks to his anonymous correspondent, J. R., of Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 208–216; in *The Home Story-Book in Prose and Verse*, 1851; in American edition, pp. 169–180; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 244–252. No MS. is extant. Written at a sitting "in two hours, as a relief from strong and painful excitement;" see Vol. I. p. 437, where the author describes in a Letter to a College Friend the feelings which the poem is meant to describe. In the ed. of 1850 the poem is dated "aged 21" (*i.e.* after Feb. 8, 1840); if that date be correct, it must have been written by Ruskin on hearing definite news of Adèle's marriage, which took place on March 12. Whether it was in that term, or in the last term of the preceding year, that Ruskin learnt of her definite betrothal, is, however, uncertain; the earlier date seems more probable. In his diary (Naples, March 12, 1841) he recalls "that evening in Christ Church when I first knew of it, . . . and went staggering along down the dark passage through the howling wind to Child's room, and sat there with him working through interminable problems." The story of the poem is told in Herodotus, iii. 14, 15. The *Times*, which had received some earlier pieces by J. R. with favour, was severe on this poem. In reviewing the Annuals for 1841, it said: "A long string of rhymes, entitled 'The Tears of Psammenitus,' is introduced to the notice of the public with a loud flourish of trumpets by the editor, but a more dull and miserable imitation of Lord Byron's early style was never written even for a college exercise" (Dec. 7, 1840).]

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With just as much of sickening thrill
As marked my heart was human still:
Yes, though my breast is bound and barred
With pain, and though that heart is hard,
And though the grief that should have bent
  Hath made me, what ye dare not mock,—
The being of untamed intent,
  Between the tiger and the rock,—
There's that of pity's outward glow
  May bid the tear atone,
In mercy to another's woe,
  For mockery of its own;
It is not cold,—it is not less,
Though yielded in unconsciousness.
And it is well that I can weep,
For in the shadow, not of sleep,
Through which, as with a vain endeavour,
These aged eyes must gaze for ever,
Their tears can catch the only light
That mellows down the mass of night;
For they have seen the curse of sight;
My spirit guards the dread detail,
And wears their vision like a veil.

They saw the low Pelusian shore
Grow warm with death and dark with gore,
  When, on those widely-watered fields,
Shivered and sank, betrayed, oppressed,
Ionian sword and Carian crest,*
  And Egypt's shade of shields:
They saw—oh God! they still must see,
That dream of long, dark agony,
A vision passing, never past,
A troop of kingly forms, that cast

* The Ionians and Carians were faithful auxiliaries of the Egyptian kings, from the beginning of the reign of Psammenitus. The helmet crest was invented by the Carians.

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Cold, quivering shadows of keen pain,
In bars of darkness, o'er my brain:[1]
I see them move,—I hear them tread,
  Each his untroubled eyes declining,
Though fierce in front, and swift and red
  The Eastern sword is sheathless shining.
I hear them tread,—the earth doth not!
Alas! its echoes have forgot
The fiery steps that shook the shore
With their swift pride in days of yore.
In vain, in vain, in wrath arrayed,
Shall Egypt wave her battle blade;
It cannot cleave the dull death shade,
Where, sternly checked and lowly laid,
Despised, dishonoured, and betrayed,
That pride is past, those steps are stayed.

Oh! would I were as those who sleep
  In yonder island lone and low,*
Beside whose shore, obscure and deep,
  Sepulchral waters flow,
And wake, with beating pause, like breath,
Their pyramidal place of death;
For it is cool and quiet there,
  And on the calm frankincensed clay
Passes no change, and this despair
  Shrinks like the baffled worm, their prey
Alike impassive. I forget
  The thoughts of him who sent ye here:[2]
Bear back these words, and say, though yet

* Under the hill on which the pyramids of Cheops were erected were excavated vaults, around which a stream from the Nile was carried by a subterraneous passage. These were sepulchres for the kings, and Cheops was buried there himself.—*Herod.* ii. 187.

[1] [For an explanation and defence by the author of this and the preceding line against the criticisms of a College Friend, see Vol. I. p. 438.]

[2] [For an explanation and defence by the author of this passage against the same friend's criticism, see Vol. I. p. 440.]

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The shade of this unkingly fear
Hath power upon my brow, no tear
Hath quenched the curse within mine eyes;
And, by that curse's fire,
I see the doom that shall possess
His hope, his passion, his desire,
His life, his strength, his nothingness.
I see, across the desert led,*
A plumèd host, on whom distress
Of fear and famine hath been shed;
Before them lies the wilderness,
Behind, along the path they tread,
If death make desolation less,
There lie a company of dead
Who cover the sand's hot nakedness
With a cool moist bed of human clay,
A soil and a surface of slow decay:
Through the dense and lifeless heap
Irregularly rise
Short shuddering waves that heave and creep,
Like spasms that plague the guilty sleep;
And where the motion dies,
A moaning mixes with the purple air.
They have not fallen in fight; the trace
Of war hath not passed by;
There is no fear on any face,
No wrath in any eye.
They have laid them down with bows unbent,
With swords unfleshed and innocent,
In the grasp of that famine whose gradual thrill
Is fiercest to torture, and longest to kill:
Stretched in one grave on the burning plain
Coiled together in knots of pain,

* Cambyses, after subduing Egypt, led an army against the Ethiopians. He was checked by famine. Persisting in his intention until the troops were obliged to kill every tenth man for food, he lost the greater part of his army.—[*Herod.* iii. 25.]

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Where the dead are twisted in skeleton writhe,
With the mortal pangs of the living and lithe;
Soaking into the sand below,
With the drip of the death-dew, heavy and slow;
Mocking the heaven that heard no prayer,
With the lifted hand and the lifeless stare—
With the lifted hand, whose tremorless clay,
Though powerless to combat, is patient to pray,
And the glance that reflects, in its vain address,
Heaven's blue from its own white lifelessness;
Heaped for a feast on the venomous ground,
For the howling jackal and herded hound;
With none that can watch, and with few that will weep,
By the home they have left, or the home they must keep,
The strength hath been lost from the desolate land,
Once fierce as the simoom, now frail as the sand.

Not unavenged: their gathered wrath
Is dark along its desert path,
Nor strength shall bide, nor madness fly
The anger of their agony;
For every eye, though sunk and dim,
And every lip, in its last need,
Hath looked and breathed a plague on him
Whose pride they fell to feed.
The dead remember well and long,
And they are cold of heart, and strong.
They died, they cursed thee; not in vain!
Along the river's reedy plain
Behold a troop,—a shadowy crowd—
Of godlike spectres, pale and proud;
In concourse calm they move and meet;
The desert billows at their feet
Heave like the sea when, deep distressed,
The waters pant in their unrest.

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Robed in a whirl of pillared sand
  Avenging Ammon glides supreme; *
The red sun smoulders in his hand,
  And, round about his brows, the gleam,
As of a broad and burning fold
Of purple wind, is wrapped and rolled.†

With failing frame and lingering tread,
  Stern Apis follows, wild and worn;‡
The blood by mortal madness shed,
  Frozen on his white limbs, anguish-torn.
What soul can bear, what strength can brook
The god-distress that fills his look?
The dreadful light of fixed disdain,
The fainting wrath, the flashing pain
Bright to decree or to confess
Another's fate—its own distress—
A mingled passion and appeal,
Dark to inflict, and deep to feel.
Who are these that flitting follow
  Indistinct and numberless?
As, through the darkness, cold and hollow,
  Of some hopeless dream, there press
  Dim, delirious shapes that dress
Their white limbs with folds of pain:
See the swift mysterious train—

* Cambyses sent 50,000 men to burn the temple of the Egyptian Jove or Ammon. They plunged into the desert, and were never heard of more. It was reported they were overwhelmed with sand.—[*Herod.* iii. 26.]

† The simoom is rendered visible by its purple tone of colour.

‡ The god Apis occasionally appeared in Egypt under the form of a handsome bull. He imprudently visited his worshippers immediately after Cambyses had returned from Ethiopia with the loss of his army and reason. Cambyses heard of his appearance, and insisted on seeing him. The officiating priests introduced Cambyses to the bull. The king looked with little respect on a deity whose divinity depended on the number of hairs in his tail, drew his dagger, wounded Apis in the thigh, and scourged all the priests. Apis died. From that time the insanity of Cambyses became evident, and he was subject to the violent and torturing passions described in the succeeding lines.—[*Herod.* iii. 29–38.]

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Forms of fixed, unbodied feeling,—
Fixed, but in a fiery trance
Of wildering mien and lightning glance,
Each its inward power revealing
Through its quivering countenance;
Visible living agonies,
Wild with everlasting motion,
Memory, with her dark dead eyes,
Tortured thoughts that useless rise,
Late remorse, and vain devotion;
Dreams of cruelty and crime,
Unmoved by rage, untamed by time;
Of fierce design, and fell delaying,
Quenched affection, strong despair,
Wan disease, and madness playing
With her own pale hair.
The last, how woeful and how wild!
Enrobed with no diviner dread
Than that one smile, so sad, so mild,
Worn by the human dead;
A spectre thing, whose pride of power
Is vested in its pain,
Becoming dreadful in the hour
When what it seems was slain.
Bound with the chill that checks the sense,
It moves in spasm-like spell:
It walks in that dead impotence,—
How weak, how terrible!
Cambyses, when thy summoned hour
Shall pause on Ecbatana's Tower,
Though barbed with guilt and swift and fierce,
Unnumbered pangs thy soul shall pierce,
The last, the worst thy heart can prove,
Must be that brother's look of love;*

* Cambyses caused his brother Smerdis to be slain, suspecting him of designs on the throne. This deed he bitterly repented of on his death-bed, being convinced of the innocence of his brother.

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That look that once shone but to bless,
Then changed, how mute, how merciless!
His blood shall bathe thy brow, his pain
Shall bind thee with a burning chain:
His arms shall drag, his wrath shall thrust
Thy soul to death, thy throne to dust;
Thy memory darkened with disgrace,
Thy kingdom wrested from thy race,*
Condemned of God, accursed of men,
Lord of my grief, remember then,
The tears of him—who will not weep again.

[Age 21.]

* Treacherously seized by Smerdis the Magus, afterwards attained by Darius Hystaspes, through the instrumentality of his groom. Cambyses died in the Syrian Ecbatana, of a wound accidentally received in the part of the thigh where he had wounded Apis.—[*Herod.* iii. 64, 84.]

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Drawn by J Ruskin

MILL at BAVENO
1845.

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FAREWELL [1]

πόθῳ δ' ὑπερπονηίας
φάσμα δέξει δόμων ἀνίσσων . . .
ὀνειρόφαντοι δὲ πανθήμονες
πάρεισιν δοκαὶ, φέρουσαι χάριν ματαίαν . . .
βέβακεν ὄψις, οὐ μεθύστερον
πτεροῖς ὀναδοῖς ὕπνου κελεύθους.
[ÆSCHYLUS, *Agamemnon*, 414–424.] [2]

I

FAREWELL! that glance so swift, so bright,
Was lightly given, but not in vain;
For, day by day, its visioned light
Must burn within my brain;
And this shall be our sole farewell:—
Let silence guard, with calm control,
The grief my words were weak to tell,
And thine unable to console.

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1841, pp. 168–180, where it was signed not "J. R." as usual, but (in allusion to the occasion of the verses) "Μονότροπος (the lonely one), September 1839." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 221–225, dated "*ætat.* 21." In the 1891 edition (ii. 154–165) it is remarked that the "*ætat.* 21" is a mistake, for in 1839 Ruskin was twenty. But the date is not that of the composition of the poem, but of the event which occasioned it—namely, the betrothal of Adèle "to another." Ruskin was still at work on the poem in March 1840. In a letter to W. H. Harrison, dated March 3, his father says: "He has the long favourite poem which he says he is finishing with great care, but it must be anonymous." In a letter to the same correspondent, dated March 22, 1840, Ruskin says:—

> "I rather think, on looking over the long dream-poem, that we must cut it into two, for in the first or second stanza I inform the young lady that on the whole it is my opinion she had much better 'Let silence guard, with calm control, The grief my words were weak to tell,' and hers 'unable to console'; after which expression of opinion, I proceed to indulge her with a treatise on oneirology some 250 heroics long. We must separate the heroics from the opinion; and if we do, the beginning will be another scrap for you, if you like to have it, and I will send you a long Greek motto from Æschylus for the rest, which you must print very carefully."

The poem was sent in without a title. Writing on May 9, 1840, Ruskin says, "I can't tell what to call the long thing. If it is to be a Farewell, it is a deuced lucky thing there's no omnibus waiting." There is no MS. extant.]

[2] [See above, p. xxii.]

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II

Let silence guard—alas! how long
The stillness of the heart shall be,
Taught to conceal the secret wrong
That should be told to thee.
Oh! hear me, ere the hour be past,
That stands between me and my fear;
And mock not at my words, the last
These lips may frame for thee to hear.

III

Farewell! a darkness and a dread
Have checked my heart and chilled my brow;
And there are tears which must be shed—
Oh! deeply, wildly, but not now.
While thou art near, I would not weep:
They come,—they come, the lonely years,
Whose wings of desolation keep
Enough of time for tears.

IV

Think not this bitterness can cease,
When these first throbs have burst their way;—
Alas! this parting is like peace,
Beside the pangs of dark delay,
That round my spirit move and brood,
Day after day, a gloomier host,
Encompassing the solitude,
Whence thou art longer lost.

V

I had strange visible thoughts when last I slept:
The crowded pangs of passion sunk and crept
Into the woof of a delirious dream:
A vision of cold earth and silent air,
Though it had that which might methinks redeem
Death from its darkness,—thou wast there,

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As thou art always when the speed
Of the keen stars is full and free;
Their light along mine eyes can lead
The glory of thy memory:
My slumber must be death indeed
When it forgets to dream of thee.

VI

And yet it was a strange dim dream:—
I drifted on a mute and arrowy stream,
Under the midnight, in a helmless boat
That lay like a dead thing cast afloat
On the weight of the waves; I could feel them come,
Many and mighty, but deep and dumb;
And the strength of their darkness drifted and drew
The rudderless length of that black canoe,
As the west wind carries a fragment rent
From a thunder-cloud's uppermost battlement.

VII

And this black boat had one expanded sail,
All woven of wan light, narrow and pale;
It clove the dense illimitable shade
Like a sheet of keen white fire; the wind, that made
Its motion, became luminous, and glowed
Through its transparent folds, in silence taking
Glory, and giving life; then failed and flowed
Back to the gloom; with many a moan forsaking
The bosom of that sail so wildly woven,
By whose swift path the lifeless night was cloven,
As by a whirling spear; beneath, the river
Repeated its white image,—a faint quiver
Of lifelike undulation rose for ever
Through its pure warp, like crystal waves that wake
Beneath the pale path of the water-snake,
When the green fireflakes through the kindled ocean
Flash from the swiftness of his sunlit motion.

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VIII

And thus I drifted, impotently sent
Down the dim strength of that wild element:
No memory behind, nor light before;
No murmur from the wave, no voices from the shore;
That shore was indistinct and desolate,
Though I could see, between me and the sky,
The black boughs of broad trees, on which the weight
Of leafage was all quiet, dead, and dry;
And they did twine themselves above my head
In clasped contortions, even as if the death
Had wrung their sapless strength, and visited
Their withering leaves with agony: beneath,
Broad weeds, in many an intertangled fold,
Heavy with dew, hung motionless and cold,
Clogging the arrowy waves with their green mass,
Mixed with moist threads of wild and sunless grass,
Whose passive undulation I could feel
Quiver beneath the boat's retarded keel.
And ever from above, the branches through,
Together fell the dead leaves and the dew:
The dew upon my brow fell chill and mute;
The leaves upon the wave, as on a lute
The fingers of a child; and where they smote,
The waters uttered an irregular note,
Subdued into strange music, as the feet
Of mourners fall in a deserted street.

IX

And thus we drifted on—my boat and I,
Until there passed a thrill along the sky,
As of a silent wind; it clove the gloom
Asunder as our souls shall cleave the tomb:
Day dropped from its wide wings, the heaven, unveiled,
Grew glorious in the west, and I beheld

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That twilight lay behind me; and, below
The paleness of its presence, there did glow
Far chains of kindling mountain peaks, which flung
The splendour from their brows, like morning dew
Dashed from an eagle's wings; their ravines hung
In purple folds from heaven: the windless blue
Of deep wide waters slumbered at their feet;
I saw the beauty of their peace repeat
An indistinct and visionary shore,
Whose glory, though untraced, I felt, or knew
Had been familiar once, though never more
To mingle with my soul; the lustre grew
Faint in the arch of heaven; the bright wind slept,
The darkness came upon me, and I wept:
Again—again it wakened, and anew
Gleamed the far shore; faint odours came and crept
Over my senses; the dark current kept
The souls of the crushed flowers in unison
With its own motion, yet they died away.
I saw the closing shadows, fast and grey,
Sink back upon the hills, but not for ever;
Thrice did the force of that far twilight sever
The cumbrous clouds; and thrice my moonlike sail
Glowed with new glory; thrice the hills did veil
Their sides with purple fire; but its third close
Was swiftest, and the place whence it arose
Grew cold in heaven, as human hearts with pain—
I watched for its return, and watched in vain.

X

And I was left alone, but not below
The boughs of that thick forest; for the flow
Of the strong tide had borne my bark within
A silent city, where its surge could win
Refuge of rest, in many an arched recess,
Pierced in the wide walls of pale palaces;

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Grey dwellings, echo haunted, vast and old,
So lifeless, that the black wave's iciest beat
Felt like warm kisses to their marble cold;
So shadowy, that the light, which from the sheet
Of my fair sail passed down that river street,
Could scarcely bid the domes it glided by
Strike their wan tracery on the midnight sky.

XI

And this was passed, and through far-opening meadows,
That pinnace by its fire-fed sail was guided
Where sparkled out star-flowers among the shadows
That dwell upon their greenness, undivided.
A sickness came across my heart—a stress
Of a deep, wild, and death-like happiness,
Which drank my spirit, as the heaven drinks dew,
Until my frame was feeble; then I knew,
Beloved, I was near thee. The silence fell
From the cold spirit of the earth; I heard
The torpor of those melodies, that dwell
In the gladness of existence, newly stirred;
And the roused joy of many a purple bird
Sprang upwards, cleaving, through the burning foam
Of the dawn clouds, a path to its blue home;
Till, as its quivering ecstasy grew strong,
It paused upon its plumes,—the shower of song
Falling like water over its wide wings.
The leaves of the thick forest moved like strings
Of a wild harp; a sound of life did pass
Through the fresh risen blades of the pale grass,
And filled its hyacinthine bells, and grew
Thrilling and deep within their hollow blue.
Even the black motion of the waters glowed
With that new joy—they murmured as they flowed;
And, when I heard the inarticulate sense
Of all things waked with that strange eloquence,

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I knew thy spirit made them sing and shine,—
Their gleaming beauty was but flashed from thine;
It passed into my soul, and did renew
That deathfulness of deep delight. I knew,
Beloved, I was near thee. I saw thee stand
On a white rock above that mighty stream,
Motionless, with the mien of mild command,
Worn but by the most beautiful; the gleam
Of thy bright hair fell o'er thy quiet brow,
With such keen glory as the golden East
Pours on the drifted clouds that float and flow
Round some pure island of moon fallen snow;
And on thy parted lips, the living glow
Was gathered in one smile—how calm, how slow,
How coldly fixed, how infinitely fair!
Its light fell quivering through the midnight air,
As the swift moonbeams through a kindling sea,—
Beaming it fell, oh! wherefore not on me?
I saw it wake the night-flowers at thy feet,
Even till their odorous pulses breathed and beat;
It fell on the cold rocks, and on the free
Unfeeling waves,—oh! wherefore not on me?

XII

And yet thine eye was on me; undesigned
Fell, as it seemed, that glance so coldly kind,
With just as much of mercy in its ray
As might forbid its light to turn away—
To turn from him to whom that glance was all
His hope could promise or his grief recall;
Whose loss must leave such night as can reveal
No farther pang on earth for him to feel.
And yet it dwelt on me,—how dark, how deep,
That soul-like eye's unfathomable sleep!
So sleeps the sunless heaven of holiest height,
When meteors flash along the calm of night;

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Rise through its voiceless depths of kindling blue,
And melt and fall in fire suffused with dew.
On me, on me,—oh! deeper, wilder yet—
Mine eyes grew dim beneath the glance they met;
My spirit drank its fire as weak winds drink
The intense and tameless lightning, till they sink,
Lost in its strength: it pierced my soul, until
That soul lay lost, and faint, and deadly still,—
Lost in the mingled spasm of love and pain,
As an eagle beaten down by golden rain
Of sunset clouds along the burning sky:
Oh! turn away, belovèd, or I die.
Thou didst not turn; my heart could better brook
The pride, than pity, of thy steadfast look;
Steeled to its scornful flash, but not to see
Its milder darkness melt, and melt for me.
I had not much to bear; the moment's spark
Of pity trembled, wavered, and was dark.
It left the look which even love must fear,
Which would be cold, if it were not severe.

XIII

Those black resistless waves my bark that bore,
Paused in thy presence by the illumined shore—
Paused, but with gathering force and wilder tone,
They rose, foamed, murmured, thundered, and dashed on—
On, in the lonely gloom, and thou the while
Didst gaze with that irrevocable smile,
Nor heed the claspèd hand and bitter cry—
The wild appeal of my vain agony:
One cry, one pang,—it was enough to fill
My heart, until it shuddered and was still—
Mute with the grief that deadly trance forgot—
Cold, as thy spirit that regarded not:
A moment more, the water's voice was thrown
Like laughter in mine ears,—I was alone.

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XIV

Alone, alone! and I was calm, nor knew
What quiet it could be that did subdue
All passion and all pain with its deep stress.
Mine eyes were dry, my limbs were motionless;
My thoughts grew still and shadowy on the brain;
The blood grew waveless in the heart and vein;
I had no memory, no regret, no dread,
Nor any other feeling, which the dead
Have not, except that I was cold as they
Can be, and know not of it. Far away
The waters bore me through long winding caves
Of sunless ice, among whose chasms the waves
Gurgled in round black pools, that whirled between
The splintered ice-crag's walls of ghastly green,
Shattered and cloven in dreadful forms, whose height
Cast fearful streams of strange and lifeless light,
Veiled with worse horror by the quivering ray,
Like dead things lighted by their own decay;
And round their summits grey wreathed clouds were twined,
Which were still torn to pieces, without wind,
And tossed and twisted in the soundless air,
Like tortured thoughts, rebellious in despair.
And through their gloom I saw vague forms arise,
Living, but with pale limbs and lightless eyes;
And some were cruel in their mien, and wild;
And some were mournful, and a few were mild;
And some were—what mine eyes could not behold—
And some were beautiful; but all were cold:
And those that were most ghastly ever grew
Into a stronger group of life; the few
Who were, or pure, or beautiful, did hide
Their faces in each other's breasts, and died;
And quivering fire rose upward from their death,
Which the foul forms that lived drank in like breath;
Making their own existence mightier: none
Remained but those I could not look upon;

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And in that fear I woke. The moon was set,
Dawn came; oh, would that it were darkness yet!
Day only drew me from that dream of ill,
To make me feel how much it could fulfil—
Scattered the trance, to make the truth succeed,
And bid the lost in sleep be lost indeed.
Far o'er the earth the beams of beauty shine;
The eyes of hope may welcome them,—not mine.
Hark! as the kindling splendours broader break,
The thousand voices of the earth awake:
The sounds of joy on other lips may dwell;—
That dawn hath but one word for mine—farewell!

XV

Farewell! but not for ever—now
The marks of pain are on my brow;
Once more we have to part, and thou
Shalt marvel in thy pride to see
How very calm that brow can be.
Once more! then through the darkness deep
The stream of life may swirl and sweep;
I shall not fear, nor feel, nor weep;
My soul, upon those billows rolled,
Shall only know that it is cold.

XVI

That vision told, how much of truth!
For as I saw the day-beam break
Behind me thrice on vale and lake,
So, thrice along the hills of youth,
Thy form my path has crossed;[1]
It left the light too brief to bless,
Too deeply loved, too darkly lost,
For hope or for forgetfulness.

[1] [Adèle's three visits to Herne Hill: Jan.–Feb. 1836, Christmas 1838, Christmas 1839.]

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XVII

Yet thou shalt come the seal to set
That guards the scroll of pleasures past;
One joy, one pang, is wanting yet,—
The loveliest, wildest,—both the last.
I see thee come with kindling cheek,
And wildering smile, and waving hair,
And glancing eye, whose flash can speak
When lips are cold and words are weak.
And what are these to my despair?
But things to stir with sobs the sleep,
That should be dreamless, deadliest deep,
From each imprisoned pang to melt
The fetters forged in vain;
And bid the ghastly life be felt,
We can but feel by pain;
To make the soul they cannot save
Heave wildly in its living grave;
And feel the worms that will not cease
To feed on—what should have been peace.

XVIII

Yet come—and let thy glance be dim,
And let thy words be low;
Then turn—for ever turn—from him
Whose love thou canst not know;—
And reck not of the faithful breast,
Whose thoughts have now no home—nor rest—
That wreathed, with unregarded light,
Thy steps by day, and sleep by night.
Then when the wildest word is past,
And when mine eyes have looked their last,
Be every barrier earth can twine
Cast in between my soul and thine,—
The wave, the wild, the steel, the flame,
And all that word or will can frame:

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When God shall call or man shall claim,
Depart from me, and let thy name
Be uttered in mine ears with dread,
As only meaning—what is dead—
Like some lost sound of long ago,
That grief is learning not to know;
And I will walk the world as one
Who hath but little left to feel;
And smile to see affection shun
The moveless brow and heart of steel:
Thou in thy pride alone shalt know
What left them lifeless years ago;
Thou mayst recall the pang, the hour,
That gave my soul that pain of power;
And deem that darkened spirit free—
Ay! even from the love of thee.

September, 1839.[1]

[Age 21.]

[1] [Given in *Friendship's Offering*, not in the *Poems*, 1850; see above, p. 193 *n*. In his diary for 1840, Ruskin notes Dec. 27 as "this day last year, the last I ever spent with ——," and Dec. 28 as "the dark day" on which he "lost her."]

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THE DEPARTED LIGHT[1]

THOU know'st the place where purple rocks receive
  The deepened silence of the pausing stream;
And myrtles and white olives interweave
  Their cool, grey shadows with the azure gleam
Of noontide; and pale temple-columns cleave
  Those waves with shafts of light (as, through a dream
Of sorrow, pierce the memories of loved hours—
  Cold and fixed thoughts that will not pass away)
All chapleted with wreaths of marble flowers,
  Too calm to live,—too lovely to decay.

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1841, pp. 217–218, signed "ρ." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 236–237; American edition, pp. 186–187; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 257–258. Written early in 1840, in order to accompany a plate which the editor of the Annual had already in hand. The plate, engraved by S. Fisher from a drawing by W. Crouch, is entitled, "View in the Campagna, near Rome," and shows temple, bridge, and mountains in the style of Claude. In sending the MS. (no longer extant) to W. H. Harrison, Ruskin wrote:—

> MY DEAR SIR,—I don't know whether the accompanying lines will suit you, but I can do nothing better for such a plate. Not that there is not some prettiness in it, and the engraver has done it full justice, but the man's mind who put it together is commonplace in the lowest degree. Such a temple! eighteen feet high at the utmost, with four columns by way of a façade. Such hills! evidently studies from the mud-heaps in the New Road, when they begin to crack into dust. Such a bridge! you might get a more respectable one for half-a-crown in the "rational toy-shop." I have spent a little malediction upon them in the verses, and verily they are damnable enough. As for the other plate, I don't know what to make of it, because there is no expression in the lady's face. Is she to look pious, or uncomfortable, or repentant, or improper, or motherly, or sisterly—or wot (*sic*)? Or is she to have the "all-right-and-no-mistake" look of young ladies at family worship? Or, in short, if I could see the plate a little further advanced, I could perhaps make something out of it; but I wish you could find some one else, for I am sure I shall do it badly.—Very truly yours,
>
> J. RUSKIN.
>
> You will see the thing is made up of two sonnets, Siamesed together, because I couldn't cast *off* the light of religion. I hope you will give me credit for my versification, even if you don't like the verses; the *eves* and *akes* are striking in *number* at least.

The "other plate" accompanied the lines called "The Two Paths" (see note on p. 189).]

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And hills rise round, pyramidal and vast,
  Like tombs built of blue heaven, above the clay
Of those who worshipped here, whose steps have past
  To silence—leaving o'er the waters cast
The light of their religion. There, at eve,
  That gentle dame would walk, when night-birds make
The starry myrtle-blossoms pant and heave
  With waves of ceaseless song; she would awake
The lulled air with her kindling thoughts, and leave
  Her voice's echo on the listening lake;
The quenched rays of her beauty would deceive
  Its depths into quick joy. Hill, wave, and brake
Grew living as she moved: I did believe
  That they were lovely, only for her sake;
But now—she is not there—at least, the chill
  Hath passed upon her which no sun shall break.
Stranger, my feet must shun the lake and hill:—
Seek them,—but dream not they are lovely still.

[Age 21.]

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AGONIA[1]

When our delight is desolate,
And hope is overthrown;
And when the heart must bear the weight
Of its own love alone;

And when the soul, whose thoughts are deep,
Must guard them unrevealed,
And feel that it is full, but keep
That fulness calm and sealed;

When Love's long glance is dark with pain—
With none to meet or cheer;
And words of woe are wild in vain
For those who cannot hear;

When earth is dark, and memory
Pale in the heaven above,
The heart can bear to lose its joy,
But not to cease to love.

But what shall guide the choice within,
Of guilt or agony,—
When to remember is to sin,
And to forget—to die?[2]

[Age 21.]

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1841, p. 288, signed "* * *." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, p. 238; American edition, pp. 188-189; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 259. No MS. is extant. This is the last of the poems on Adèle.]

[2] [*Cf.* above, "Salsette and Elephanta," line 68, p. 93.]

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[1841][1]

THE HILLS OF CARRARA *

I

Amidst a vale of springing leaves,
  Where spreads the vine its wandering root,
And cumbrous fall the autumnal sheaves,
  And olives shed their sable fruit,
  And gentle winds and waters never mute
Make of young boughs and pebbles pure
  One universal lute,
And bright birds, through the myrtle copse obscure,
Pierce, with quick notes, and plumage dipped in dew,
The silence and the shade of each lulled avenue,—

II

Far in the depths of voiceless skies,
  Where calm and cold the stars are strewed,
The peaks of pale Carrara rise.
  Nor sound of storm, nor whirlwind rude,

* The mountains of Carrara, from which nearly all the marble now used in sculpture is derived, form by far the finest piece of hill scenery I know in Italy. They rise out of valleys of exquisite richness, being themselves singularly desolate, magnificent in form, and noble in elevation; but without forests on their flanks, and without one blade of grass on their summits.

[1] [Ruskin was travelling abroad in pursuit of health during the winter of 1840 and the spring and early summer of 1841 (see Vol. I. p. xxxviii.). The impulse towards verse seems no longer to have been felt. The only poetical outcome of the tour is "The Hills of Carrara," though during this period he continued "The Broken Chain."]

[2] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1842, pp. 178–180, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 249–251; *The Painter Poets*, ed. K. Parkes, 1890, pp. 187–189; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 273–275. There is no MS. extant. Written early in 1841. Ruskin was at Carrara in November 1840, and in a Letter to a College Friend speaks of "the snow-white, stainless marble, out of whose dead mass life is leaping day by day into every palace of Europe" (see Vol. I. p. 431, and cf. *Præterita*, i. ch. ii. § 26). For a later reference to the mountains of Carrara, see *Modern Painters*, vol. iii. ch. xv. § 17.]

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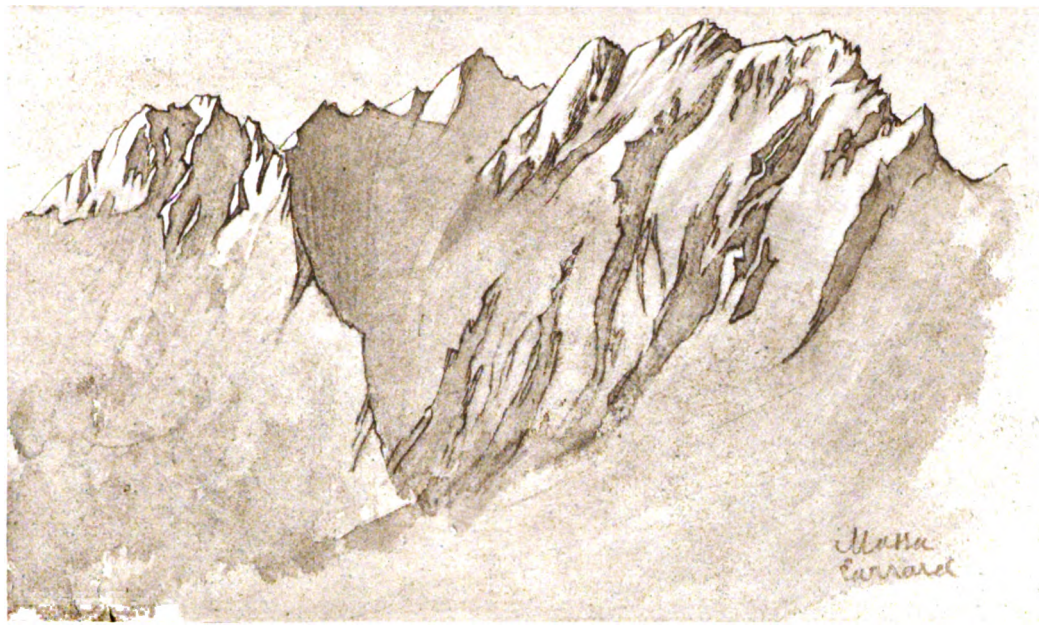

Drawn by J Ruskin

At CARRARA:

Ravines cut by weather and wavy structure, in hard rock
(Crystalline marble.)

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Can break their chill of marble solitude;
The crimson lightnings round their crest
May hold their fiery feud—
They hear not, nor reply; their chasmèd rest
No flowret decks, nor herbage green, nor breath
Of moving thing can change their atmosphere of death.

III

But far beneath, in folded sleep,
Faint forms of heavenly life are laid,
With pale brows and soft eyes, that keep
Sweet peace of unawakened shade;
Whose wreathèd limbs, in robes of rock arrayed,
Fall like white waves on human thought,
In fitful dreams displayed;
Deep through their secret homes of slumber sought,
They rise immortal, children of the day,
Gleaming with godlike forms on earth, and her decay.

IV

Yes, where the bud hath brightest germ,
And broad the golden blossoms glow,
There glides the snake, and works the worm,
And black the earth is laid below.
Ah! think not thou the souls of men to know,
By outward smiles in wildness worn:
The words that jest at woe
Spring not less lightly, though the heart be torn—
The mocking heart, that scarcely dares confess,
Even to itself, the strength of its own bitterness.

V

Nor deem that they, whose words are cold,
Whose brows are dark, have hearts of steel;
The couchant strength, untraced, untold,
Of thoughts they keep, and throbs they feel,
May need an answering music to unseal;

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Who knows what waves may stir the silent sea,
Beneath the low appeal,
From distant shores, of winds unfelt by thee?
What sounds may wake within the winding shell,
Responsive to the charm of those who touch it well!

[Age 22.]

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[1842][1]

CHARITIE[2]

I

THE beams of morning are renewed,
The valley laughs their light to see;
And earth is bright with gratitude,
And heaven with Charitie.

II

Oh dew of heaven! Oh light of earth!
Fain would our hearts be filled with thee,
Because nor darkness comes, nor dearth,
About the home of Charitie.

[1] [We have here reached the period in Ruskin's life when *Modern Painters* was taking shape (for biographical particulars, see Introduction to Vol. III.). His best energies were now devoted to the various studies involved in that work, but he still occupied himself occasionally with verse. The other piece of the year shows the interest in Napoleonic subjects which had been aroused in Ruskin by his competing for the Newdigate in 1838, "The Exile of St. Helena." In the same year he finished "The Broken Chain." In the summer of 1842 Ruskin again went abroad with his parents, and it is possible that "A Walk in Chamouni" was written at that place.]

[2] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 252–254, where, in stanza ii. line 3, "death" for "dearth" is an obvious error; reprinted in *The Literary World*, April 12, 1878, p. 234; *The Life and Teaching of John Ruskin*, by J. Marshall Mather, 2nd edition only (1884), pp. 31–32; *John Ruskin, a Study*, by R. P. Downes, 1890, pp. 118–119; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 279–281. "Charitie" is attributed in the *Poems* of 1850 to the year 1842. There is, however, in existence a manuscript copy of *The King of the Golden River* (in the handwriting of the girl for whom it was composed), to which there is appended in Ruskin's handwriting a copy of these verses. They are there entitled by him "The Praise of Charitie," with the sub-title, "A Morning Hymn of the Treasure Valley." At the end of the story, Gluck (the third brother) "went and dwelt in the valley, and the poor were never driven from his door;" and "thus the Treasure Valley became a garden again, and the inheritance, which had been lost by cruelty, was regained by love" (Vol. I. p. 347). A poem in praise of Charitie comes appropriately, therefore, at the end of the story, and the verses may have been written at the same time (1841). The MS. copy shows the following variations from the text printed (from the *Poems*, 1850) above: in st. i. line 1, "The beams of Morning *rise* renewed"; st. iii. line 3, "But binds *them to* Himself for aye"; st. iv. line 2, "And heaped the hills, and *bound* the sea"; st. vii. line 1, "*A darksome vale he walks within*"; st. ix. line 4, "perfect, spotless."]

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III

God guides the stars their wandering way,
He seems to cast their courses free;
But binds unto Himself for aye,
And all their chains are Charitie.

IV

When first He stretched the signèd zone,
And heaped the hills, and barred the sea,
Then Wisdom sat beside His throne;
But His own Word was Charitie.

V

And still, through every age and hour,
Of things that were and things that be,
Are breathed the presence and the power
Of everlasting Charitie.

VI

By noon and night, by sun and shower,
By dews that fall and winds that flee,
On grove and field, on fold and flower,
Is shed the peace of Charitie.

VII

The violets light the lonely hill,
The fruitful furrows load the lea;
Man's heart alone is sterile still
For lack of lowly Charitie.

VIII

He walks a weary vale within,—
No lamp of love in heart hath he;
His steps are death, his thoughts are sin,
For lack of gentle Charitie.

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IX

Daughter of heaven! we dare not lift
The dimness of our eyes to thee;
Oh! pure and God-descended gift!
Oh! spotless, perfect Charitie!

X

Yet forasmuch thy brow is crossed
With blood-drops from the deathful tree,
We take thee for our only trust,
Oh! dying Charitie!

XI

Ah! Hope, Endurance, Faith,—ye fail like death,
But Love an everlasting crown receiveth;
For she is Hope, and Fortitude, and Faith,
Who all things hopeth, beareth, and believeth.

[Age 23.]

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THE BATTLE OF MONTENOTTE[1]

"My patent of nobility" (said Napoleon) "dates from the Battle of Montenotte."

I

SLOW lifts the night her starry host
  Above the mountain chain
That guards the grey Ligurian coast,
  And lights the Lombard plain;
That plain, that, softening on the sight,
Lies blue beneath the balm of night,
With lapse of rivers lulled, that glide
In lustre broad of living tide;
Or pause for hours of peace beside
The shores they double, and divide,
To feed with heaven's reverted hue
The clustered vine's expanding blue:
With crystal flow, for evermore,
They lave a blood-polluted shore;
Ah! not the snows, whose wreaths renew
Their radiant depth with stainless dew,
Can bid their banks be pure, or bless
The guilty land with holiness.

[1] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1844, pp. 59–69, the author's footnotes being given at the end, with plate of "Coast of Genoa," drawn by J. Ruskin, engraved by J. C. Armytage. The plate was reprinted in *Sharp's London Journal of Entertainment and Instruction for General Readers*, vol. xv. (*circa* 1852), facing p. 289. The poem was reprinted without the illustration, or the note thereon, in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 255–264; American edition, pp. 206–219; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 285–294 (with plate and note). There is no MS. extant. In the *Poems*, 1850, the piece is dated "*ætat.* 24," *i.e.* 1843, but it must have been written in 1842 or earlier, as it is named as being in proof in a letter of J. J. Ruskin to W. H. Harrison (September 12, no year), in which the first volume of *Modern Painters* (issued April 1843) is referred to as coming out.]

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II

In stormy waves, whose wrath can reach
The rocks that back the topmost beach,
The midnight sea falls wild and deep
Around Savona's marble steep,
And Voltri's crescent bay.
What fiery lines are these, that flash
Where fierce the breakers curl and crash,
And fastest flies the spray?
No moon has risen to mark the night,
Nor such the flakes of phosphor[1] light
That wake along the southern wave,
By Baiæ's cliff and Capri's cave,
Until the dawn of day:
The phosphor flame is soft and green
Beneath the hollow surges seen;
But these are dyed with dusky red
Far on the fitful surface shed;
And evermore, their glance between,
The mountain gust is deeply stirred
With low vibration, felt, and heard,
Which winds and leaves confuse, in vain;
It gathers through their maze again,
Redoubling round the rocks it smote,
Till falls in fear the night-bird's note,
And every sound beside is still,
But plash of torrent from the hill,
And murmur by the branches made
That bend above its bright cascade.

III

Hark, hark! the hollow Apennine
Laughs in his heart afar;
Through all his vales he drinks like wine
The deepening draught of war;

[*Cf.* note on p. 94.]

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For not with doubtful burst, or slow,
That thunder shakes his breathless snow,
But ceaseless rends, with rattling stroke,
The veils of white volcano-smoke
That o'er Legino's ridges rest,*
And writhe in Merla's vale:
There lifts the Frank his triple crest,
Crowned with its plumage pale;
Though, clogged and dyed with stains of death,
It scarce obeys the tempest's breath;
And darker still, and deadlier press
The war-clouds on its weariness.
Far by the bright Bormida's banks
The Austrian cheers his chosen ranks,
In ponderous waves, that, where they check
Rise o'er their own tumultuous wreck,
Recoiling—crashing—gathering still
In rage around that Island hill,
Where stand the moveless Few—
Few—fewer as the moments flit;
Though shaft and shell their columns split
As morning melts the dew.
Though narrower yet their guarding grows,
And hot the heaps of carnage close,

* The Austrian centre, 10,000 strong, had been advanced to Montenotte, in order, if possible, to cut asunder the French force, which was following the route of the Corniche. It encountered at Montenotte only Colonel Rampon, at the head of 1200 men, who retiring to the redoubt at Monte Legino, defended it against the repeated attacks of the Austrians until nightfall—making his soldiers swear to conquer or die. The Austrian general, Roccavina, was severely wounded, and his successor, D'Argenteau, refused to continue the attack. Napoleon was lying at Savona, but set out after sunset with the divisions of Massena and Serrurier, and occupied the heights at Montenotte. At daybreak the Imperialists found themselves surrounded on all sides, and were totally defeated, with the loss of two thousand prisoners, and above one thousand killed and wounded. [April 12, 1796.]

This victory, the first gained by Napoleon, was the foundation of the success of the Italian campaign. Had Colonel Rampon been compelled to retire from Monte Legino, the fate of the world would probably have been changed.—*Vide* Alison, ch. xx.

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In death's faint shade and fiery shock,
They stand, one ridge of living rock,
Which steel may rend, and wave may wear,
And bolt may crush, and blast may tear,
  But none can strike from its abiding.
The flood, the flash, the steel, may bear
Perchance destruction—*not* despair,
  And death—but not dividing.
What matter? while their ground they keep,
Though here a column—there an heap—
Though these in wrath—and those in sleep,
  If all are there.

IV

Charge, D'Argenteau! Fast flies the night,
The snows look wan with inward light:
Charge, D'Argenteau! Thy kingdom's power
Wins not again this hope, nor hour:
The force—the fate of France is thrown
  Behind those feeble shields;
That ridge of death-defended stone
  Were worth a thousand fields!
In vain—in vain! Thy broad array
Breaks on their front of spears like spray:
Thine hour hath struck—the dawning red
Is o'er thy wavering standards shed;
A darker dye thy folds shall take
Before its utmost beams can break.

V

Out of its Eastern fountains
  The river of day is drawn,
And the shadows of the mountains
  March downward from the dawn,—
The shadows of the ancient hills,
  Shortening as they go,

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Down beside the dancing rills
  Wearily and slow.
The morning wind the mead hath kissed;
  It leads in narrow lines
The shadows of the silver mist,
  To pause among the pines.
But where the sun is calm and hot,
  And where the wind hath peace,
There is a shade that pauseth not,
  And a sound that doth not cease.
The shade is like a sable river
  Broken with sparkles bright;
The sound is like dead leaves that shiver
  In the decay of night.

VI

Together, came with pulse-like beat,
  The darkness, and the tread—
A motion calm—a murmur sweet,
  Yet deathful[1] both, and dread;
Poised on the hill,—a fringèd shroud,
  It wavered like the sea;
Then clove itself, as doth a cloud,
  In sable columns three.
They fired no shot,—they gave no sign,—
  They blew no battle-peal;
But down they came, in deadly line,
  Like whirling bars of steel.
As fades the forest from its place
  Beneath the lava flood,
The Austrian host, before their face,
  Was melted into blood:
They moved, as moves the solemn night,
  With lulling, and release;
Before them, all was fear and flight,
  Behind them, all was peace:

[1] [Misprinted "dreadful" in ed. of 1891.]

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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The Coast of Genoa.

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Before them flashed the roaring glen
With bayonet and brand;
Behind them lay the wrecks of men,
Like sea-weed on the sand.

VII

But still, along the cumbered heath,
A vision strange and fair
Did fill the eyes that failed in death,
And darkened in despair;
Where blazed the battle wild and hot,
A youth, deep-eyed and pale,
Did move amidst the storm of shot,
As the fire of God through hail.
He moved, serene as spirits are,
And dying eyes might see
Above his head a crimson star
Burning continually.

. . . . . .

VIII

With bended head and breathless tread,
The traveller tracks that silent shore;
Oppressed with thoughts that seek the dead,
And visions that restore;
Or lightly trims his pausing bark,
Where lies the ocean lulled and dark,*

* The view given in the engraving, though not near the scene of the battle, is very characteristic of the general features of the coast. The ruins in the centre are the Château de Cornolet, near Mentone; the sharp dark promontory running out beyond, to the left, is the Capo St. Martin; that beyond it is the promontory of Monaco. Behind the hills, on the right, lies the Bay of Nice and the point of Antibes. The dark hills in the extreme distance rise immediately above Fréjus. Among them winds the magnificent Pass de l'Esterelle, which, for richness of Southern forest scenery, and for general grace of mountain outline, surpasses anything on the Corniche itself.[1]

[1] [Cf. *Præterita*, ii. ch. ii. § 22, and iii. ch. iii. ("L'Esterelle"), § 58 *n.*]

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Beneath the marble mounds that stay
The strength of many a bending bay,
And lace with silver lines the flow
Of tideless waters to and fro,
  As drifts the breeze, or dies;
That scarce recalls its lightness, left
In many a purple-curtained cleft,
Whence to the softly lighted skies
Low flowers lift up their dark blue eyes
To bring by fits the deep perfume
Alternate, as the bending bloom
  Diffuses or denies.
Above, the slopes of mountain shine,
Where glows the citron, glides the vine,
And breathes the myrtle wildly bright,
And aloes lift their lamps of light,
And ceaseless sunbeams clothe the calm
Of orbèd pine and vaulted palm;
Dark trees, that sacred order keep,
And rise in temples o'er the steep—
Eternal shrines, whose columned shade,
Though winds may shake, and frosts may fade,
And dateless years subdue,
Is softly builded, ever new,
  By angel hands, and wears the dread
And stillness of a sacred place,—
A sadness of celestial grace,—
  A shadow, God-inhabited.

IX

And all is peace, around, above,
The air all balm—the light all love,—
Enduring love, that burns and broods
Serenely o'er these solitudes;
Or pours at intervals a part
Of heaven upon the wanderer's heart,

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Whose subject soul and quiet thought
Are open to be touched, or taught,
By mute address of bud and beam,
Of purple peak and silver stream,—
By sounds that fall at nature's choice,
And things, whose being is their voice,
Innumerable tongues that teach
  The will and ways of God to men,
In waves that beat the lonely beach,
  And winds that haunt the homeless glen,
Where they, who ruled the rushing deep,
  The restless and the brave,
Have left along their native steep
  The ruin, and the grave.

X

And he, who gazes while the day
Departs along the boundless bay,
May find against its fading streak
The shadow of a single peak,
  Seen only when the surges smile,
And all the heaven is clear,
  That sad and solitary isle,*
Where, captive, from his red career,
He sank—who shook the hemisphere;
Then, turning from the hollow sea,
  May trace, across the crimsoned height
That saw his earliest victory,
  The purple rainbow's resting light,
And the last lines of storm that fade
Within the peaceful evening shade.

[Age 23.]

* Elba, which is said to be visible from most of the elevated points of this coast. From the citadel of Genoa I have seen what was asserted to be Elba. I believe it to have been Corsica.

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[1843][1]

A WALK IN CHAMOUNI[2]

TOGETHER on the valley, white and sweet,
The dew and silence of the morning lay:
Only the tread of my disturbing feet
Did break, with printed shade and patient beat,
The crispèd stillness of the meadow way;
And frequent mountain waters, welling up
In crystal gloom beneath some mouldering stone,
Curdled in many a flower-enamelled cup,
Whose soft and purple border, scarcely blown,
Budded beneath their touch, and trembled to their tone.

[1] [In 1843 the first volume of *Modern Painters* was published, and Ruskin was hard at work with a view to the continuation of the book (see *Letters to a College Friend*, Vol. I. p. 493), and also in answering his critics (see Vol. III.). The only piece of verse ascribed to this year in the *Poems*, 1850, is "A Walk in Chamouni," which, however, was suggested by, if not composed during, his stay at that place in the summer of the preceding year.]

[2] [First published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1844, pp. 141–144, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford," with plate of "Glacier des Bois," drawn by J. Ruskin, engraved by J. C. Armytage. This plate was reprinted in *Sharp's London Journal*, vol. xvi. (*circa* 1852), facing p. 307. The poem was reprinted without illustration in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 265–268; American edition, pp. 220–225; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 295–298 (with the plate). There is no MS. of the poem. Ruskin was at Chamouni in 1842, and this poem must record impressions then received. He was at the same time revising the proofs for *Friendship's Offering* of 1843, and wrote to W. H. Harrison (Chamouni, June 20, 1842):—

> "If I have not followed *every* suggestion you have made, it is only because I am so occupied in the morning—and so tired at night—with snow and granite, that I cannot bring my mind into a state capable of taking careful cognizance of anything of the kind. I cannot even try the melody of a verse, for the Arve rushes furiously under my window—mixing in my ear with even *imaginary* sound, and every moment of time is so valuable—between mineralogy and drawing—and getting ideas;—for not an hour, from dawn to moonrise, on any day since I have been in sight of Mont Blanc, has passed without its own peculiar—unreportable—evanescent phenomena, that I can hardly prevail upon myself to snatch a moment for work on verses which I feel persuaded I shall in a year or two almost entirely re-write, as none of them are what I wish, or what I can make them in time."

It is interesting to compare these verses on the valley of Chamouni with an impression

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The fringèd branches of the swinging pines
Closed o'er my path; a darkness in the sky,
That barred its dappled vault with rugged lines,
And silver network,*—interwoven signs
Of dateless age and deathless infancy;
Then through their aisles a motion and a brightness
Kindled and shook—the weight of shade they bore
On their broad arms was lifted by the lightness
Of a soft, shuddering wind, and what they wore
Of jewelled dew, was strewed about the forest floor.

That thrill of gushing wind and glittering rain
Onward amid the woodland hollows went;
And bade by turns the drooping boughs complain
O'er the brown earth, that drank in lightless stain
The beauty of their burning ornament;

* The white mosses on the melèze, when the tree is very old, are singularly beautiful, resembling frost-work of silver.

---

in prose of the same date. In a letter to the Rev. W. L. Brown (his college tutor, for whom see Vol. I. p. 464, and *Præterita*, ii. ch. iv. § 68), August 1842 (of which a copy, kept by his father, is at Brantwood), Ruskin writes :—

"Chamouni is such a place! There is no sky like its sky. They may talk of Italy as they like. There is no blue of any firmament visible to mortal eye, comparable to the intensity and purity and depth of an Alpine heaven seen from 6000 feet up. The very evaporation from the snow gives it a crystalline, unfathomable depth never elsewhere seen. There is no air like its air. Coming down from Chamouni into the lower world is like coming out of open morning air into an ale-house parlour where people have been sleeping and smoking with the door shut all night; and for its earth, there is not a stick nor a stone in the valley that is not toned with the majestic spirit; there is nothing pretty there, it is all beautiful to its lowest and lightest details, bursting forth below and above with such an inconceivable mixture of love and power—of grace with glory—its dews seem to ennoble, and its storms to bless; and with all the constant sensations of majesty from which you never can escape, there is such infinite variety of manifestation, such eternal mingling of every source of awe, that it never oppresses, though it educates you. Nor can you ever forget for an instant either the gentleness or the omnipotence of the ruling Spirit. Though the whole air around you may be undulating with thunder, the rock under which you are sheltered is lighted with stars of strange, pure, unearthly flowers, as if every fissure had had an angel working [there?] all spring; and if the sky be cloudless, and you bury your head in a bank of gentians, and forget for an instant that there is anything round you but gentleness and delight, you are roused by the hollow crash of the advancing glacier, or the long echoing fall of some bounding rock, or the deep prolonged thrilling murmur of a far-off avalanche, which would be sounds of Death if they were not in Regions of Death."]

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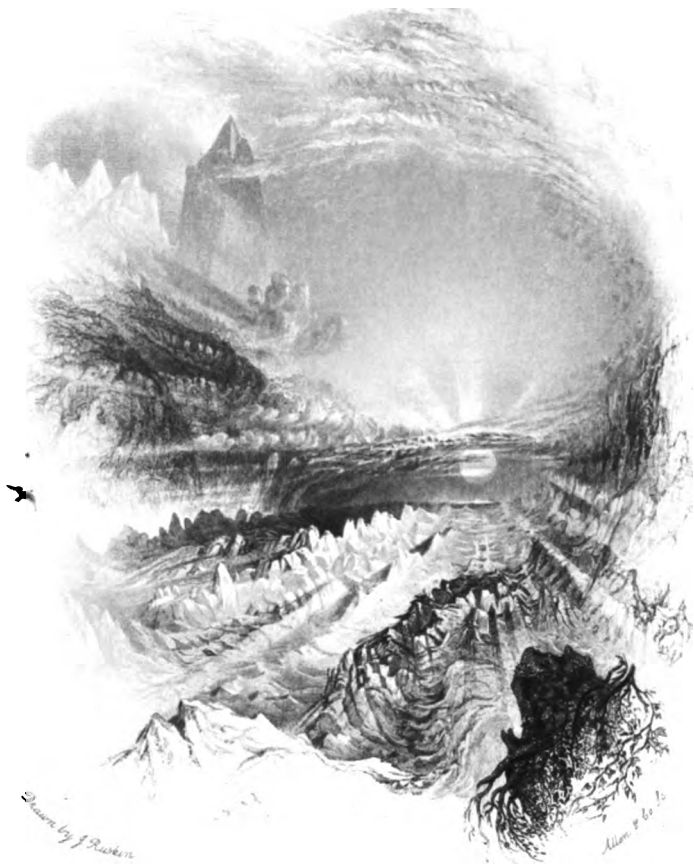

THE GLACIER DES BOIS.

1843.

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And melting mists and threads of purple rain
  Fretted the fair sky where the east was red,
Gliding like ghosts along the voiceless plain,
  In rainbow hues around its coldness shed,
  Like thoughts of loving hearts that haunt about the
    dead.

And over these, as pure as if the breath
  Of God had called them newly into light,
Free from all stamp of sin, or shade of death,
With which the old creation travaileth,
  Rose the white mountains, through the infinite
  Of the calm, concave heaven; inly bright
With lustre everlasting and intense;
  Serene and universal as the night,
But yet more solemn with pervading sense
Of the deep stillness of Omnipotence.

Deep stillness! for the throbs of human thought
  Count not the lonely night that pauses here;
And the white arch of morning findeth not,
By chasm or alp, a spirit, or a spot
  Its call can waken or its beams can cheer:
There are no eyes to watch, no lips to meet
  Its messages with prayer—no matin bell
Touches the delicate air with summons sweet;—
  That smoke was of the avalanche;* that knell
  Came from a tower of ice that into fragments fell.

Ah! why should that be comfortless—why cold,
  Which is so near to heaven? The lowly earth,
Out of the blackness of its charnel mould,

* The vapour or dust of dry snow which rises after the fall of a large avalanche, sometimes looks in the distance not unlike the smoke of a village.

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Feeds its fresh life, and lights its banks with gold;
But these proud summits, in eternal dearth,
Whose solitudes nor mourning know, nor mirth,
Rise passionless and pure, but all unblest:
Corruption—must it root the brightest birth?
And is the life that bears its fruitage best,
One neither of supremacy nor rest?

[Age 24.]

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[1844][1]

LA MADONNA DELL' ACQUA[2]

In the centre of the lagoon between Venice and the mouths of the Brenta, supported on a few mouldering piles, stands a small shrine dedicated to the Madonna dell' Acqua, which the gondolier never passes without a prayer.

AROUND her shrine no earthly blossoms blow,
No footsteps fret the pathway to and fro;
No sign nor record of departed prayer,
Print of the stone, nor echo of the air;
Worn by the lip, nor wearied by the knee,—
Only a deeper silence of the sea:
For there, in passing, pause the breezes bleak,
And the foam fades, and all the waves are weak.
The pulse-like oars in softer fall succeed,
The black prow falters through the wild seaweed—
Where, twilight-borne, the minute thunders reach
Of deep-mouthed surf, that bays by Lido's beach,
With intermittent motion traversed far,
And shattered glancing of the western star,
Till the faint storm-bird on the heaving flow
Drops in white circles, silently like snow.
Not here the ponderous gem, nor pealing note,
Dim to adorn—insentient to adore—
But purple-dyed, the mists of evening float,
In ceaseless incense from the burning floor

[1] [In this year Ruskin produced some of his best pieces; two of them suggested by earlier travels. He was abroad in 1844 with his parents from May to August, but did not on this occasion visit Venice, nor probably Marengo.]

[2] [First published in Heath's *Book of Beauty*, 1845, pp. 18–19, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 269–270; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 301–302; the first twelve lines, as "of surpassing beauty," in Sir M. E. Grant Duff's *Victorian Anthology*, 1902, p. 267. No MS. of the poem is extant. There is a prose description of the Madonna dell' Acqua in *Velasquez* (ch. ii.); see Vol. I. p. 543.]

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Of ocean, and the gathered gold of heaven
Laces its sapphire vault, and, early given,
The white rays of the rushing firmament
Pierce the blue-quivering night through wreath or rent
Of cloud inscrutable and motionless,
Hectic and wan, and moon-companioned cloud!
Oh! lone Madonna—angel of the deep—
When the night falls, and deadly winds are loud,
Will not thy love be with us while we keep
Our watch upon the waters, and the gaze
Of thy soft eyes, that slumber not, nor sleep?
Deem not thou, stranger, that such trust is vain;
Faith walks not on these weary waves alone,
Though weakness dread, or apathy disdain
The spot which God has hallowed for His own.
They sin who pass it lightly—ill divining
The glory of this place of bitter prayer;
And hoping against hope, and self-resigning,
And reach of faith, and wrestling with despair,
And resurrection of the last distress,
Into the sense of heaven, when earth is bare,
And of God's voice, when man's is comfortless.

[Age 25.]

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THE OLD SEAMAN[1]

I

You ask me why mine eyes are bent
So darkly on the sea,
While others watch the azure hills
That lengthen on the lee.

II

The azure hills—they soothe the sight
That fails along the foam;
And those may hail their nearing height
Who there have hope or home.

III

But I a loveless path have trod—
A beaconless career;
My hope hath long been all with God,
And all my home is—*here*.

IV

The deep by day, the heaven by night
Roll onward, swift and dark;
Nor leave my soul the dove's delight
Of olive branch, or ark.

[1] [First published in *The Keepsake* for 1845 (issued in the preceding autumn, edited by the Countess of Blessington), pp. 63–64, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted (and reviewed) in the *Athenæum*, No. 890 (Nov. 16, 1844), p. 1045; in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 271–273; American edition, pp. 226–229; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 303–305. This and the next poem were, as appears from a letter of J. J. Ruskin, written by the author for his father's birthday in 1844. No MS. of it is extant.]

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V

For more than gale, or gulf, or sand,
I've proved that there may be
Worse treachery on the steadfast land
Than variable sea.

VI

A danger worse than bay or beach—
A falsehood more unkind—
The treachery of a governed speech,
And an ungoverned mind.

VII

The treachery of the deadly mart
Where human souls are sold;
The treachery of the hollow heart
That crumbles as we hold.

VIII

Those holy hills and quiet lakes—
Ah! wherefore should I find
This weary fever-fit, that shakes
Their image in my mind?

IX

The memory of a streamlet's din,
Through meadows daisy-drest—
Another might be glad therein,
And yet I cannot rest.

X

I cannot rest unless it be
Beneath the churchyard yew;
But God, I think, hath yet for me
More earthly work to do.

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XI

And therefore, with a quiet will,
I breathe the ocean air,
And bless the voice that calls me still
To wander and to bear.

XII

Let others seek their native sod,
Who there have hearts to cheer;
My soul hath long been given to God,
And all my home is—*here*.

[Age 25.]

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THE ALPS[1]

SEEN FROM MARENGO

THE glory of a cloud—without its wane;
The stillness of the earth—but not its gloom;
The loveliness of life—without its pain;
The peace—but not the hunger—of the tomb!
Ye Pyramids of God! around whose bases
The sea foams noteless in his narrow cup;
And the unseen movements of the earth send up
A murmur which your lulling snow effaces
Like the deer's footsteps. Thrones imperishable!
About whose adamantine steps the breath
Of dying generations vanisheth,
Less cognizable than clouds; and dynasties,
Less glorious and more feeble than the array
Of your frail glaciers, unregarded rise,
Totter and vanish. In the uncounted day,
When earth shall tremble as the trump unwraps
Their sheets of slumber from the crumbling dead,
And the quick, thirsty fire of judgment laps
The loud sea from the hollow of his bed—
Shall not your God spare *you*, to whom He gave
No share nor shadow of man's crime, or fate;
Nothing to render, nor to expiate;
Untainted by his life—untrusted with his grave?

[Age 25.]

[1] [First published in *The Keepsake* for 1845, p. 270, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, p. 274; American edition, pp. 230–231; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 306–307. No MS. of the lines is extant.]

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Sunset at Baveno.

1845.

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[1845][1]

MONT BLANC REVISITED[2]

9TH JUNE, 1845

I

Oh, mount beloved! mine eyes again
Behold the twilight's sanguine stain
  Along thy peaks expire.
Oh, mount beloved! thy frontier waste
I seek with a religious haste,
  And reverent desire.

[1] [The year 1845 was the last in which Ruskin seriously cultivated his poetical talent (see below, note 2). He travelled abroad—without his parents this time—from April to November 4, and the five pieces of the year were all written during, or suggested by, his travels (see following notes). On his return home, he set to work at writing vol. ii. of *Modern Painters*, for which his studies and travels in preceding years had been preparing him.]

[2] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 275–277. Reprinted in *Beautiful Poetry*, 1854, vol. ii. pp. 62–63; misdated "9th June 1851"; in *Lyra Christiana*, Edinburgh (*circa* 1860), pp. 247–249; in *Hymns for the Household of Faith*, London, 1861, pp. 225–226; 2nd edition, 1867, pp. 529–531; 3rd edition, 1876, pp. 505–507; in *Præterita*, iii. ch. i., Ruskin printed a revised version, which will be found in that place; the text here given is that of the *Poems*, 1850. No MS. of the poem is preserved. In the version in *Præterita*, stanza v. line 3 reads "regrets" for "rejects"; line 4, "Till" for "That." Stanza vi. is omitted. Stanza vii. line 1, reads "Yet" for "But"; line 4, "leads" for "moves." In the *Poems*, 1850, it is dated "9th June 1845." *Præterita*, iii. ch. i., heads it "*Written at Nyon in* 1845"; *Præterita*, ii. ch. vi. § 109, says it was "written at Geneva." The date and place of writing are, however, fixed by a letter to his mother, dated Florence, June 9, 1845, in which he writes:—

> "I had my father's verses to do when I came in, and mighty bad ones they are, but he must take 'em with my love, for want of better. I am getting far too methodical to write poetry now, and a little too pious, as you will see by the tone of them, and perhaps a shade too modest into the bargain, as you will perceive, by my comparing myself to Moses and Elijah in the same couplet. But the fact is, I am really getting more pious than I was, owing primarily to George Herbert, who is the only religious person I ever could understand or agree with, and secondarily, to Fra Angelico and Benozzo Gozzoli, who make me believe everything they paint, be it ever so out of the way."

(For George Herbert, see Vol. I. pp. 409, 466.) "The author perhaps saw Mont Blanc on coming down to Nyon from St. Cergues one evening in April, sketched the poem at Geneva, and copied it out on June 9, after writing the 'Basses Alpes,' the sentiment of which is echoed in stanza v." (*Editor's Note*, 1891). See

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II

They meet me midst thy shadows cold,—
Such thoughts as holy men of old
  Amid the desert found;
Such gladness as in Him they felt,
Who with them through the darkness dwelt,
  And compassed all around.

III

Oh! happy, if His will were so,
To give me manna here for snow,
  And, by the torrent side,
To lead me, as He leads His flocks
Of wild deer, through the lonely rocks,
  In peace unterrified;

IV

Since, from the things that trustful rest—
The partridge on her purple nest,
  The marmot in his den;—
God wins a worship more resigned—
A purer praise than He can find
  Upon the lips of men.

the two passages referred to above in *Præterita*, where Ruskin refers to this poem, the "Basses Alpes," and "The Glacier" as "the last rhymes I attempted in any seriousness," and "the last serious exertions of my poetical powers. I perceived finally that I could express nothing I had to say rightly in that manner." But these last pieces, he adds, were "extremely earnest," and show "the real temper" in which he began "the best work of my life" (*i.e.* the second volume of *Modern Painters* and later work). In stanza i. line 2, he adds, "My mother at once found fault with the words 'sanguine stain' as painful, and untrue of the rose-colour on snow at sunset; but they had their meaning to myself,—the too common Evangelical phrase, 'washed in the blood of Christ,' being, it seemed to me, if true at all, true of the earth and her purest snow, as well as of her purest creatures; and the claim of being able to find among the rock-shadows thoughts such as hermits of old found in the desert, whether it seemed immodest or not, was wholly true." In stanza v., the last line seems to refer not so much to morbid grave-worship (though this was a point often made by Ruskin) as to the heartless pursuit of pleasure: *cf.* Wordsworth's:—

"Never to blend our pleasure, or our pride,
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels."

Ruskin cites these lines from Hart-leap Well in *Modern Painters*, vol. ii. sec. i. ch. xii. § 2.]

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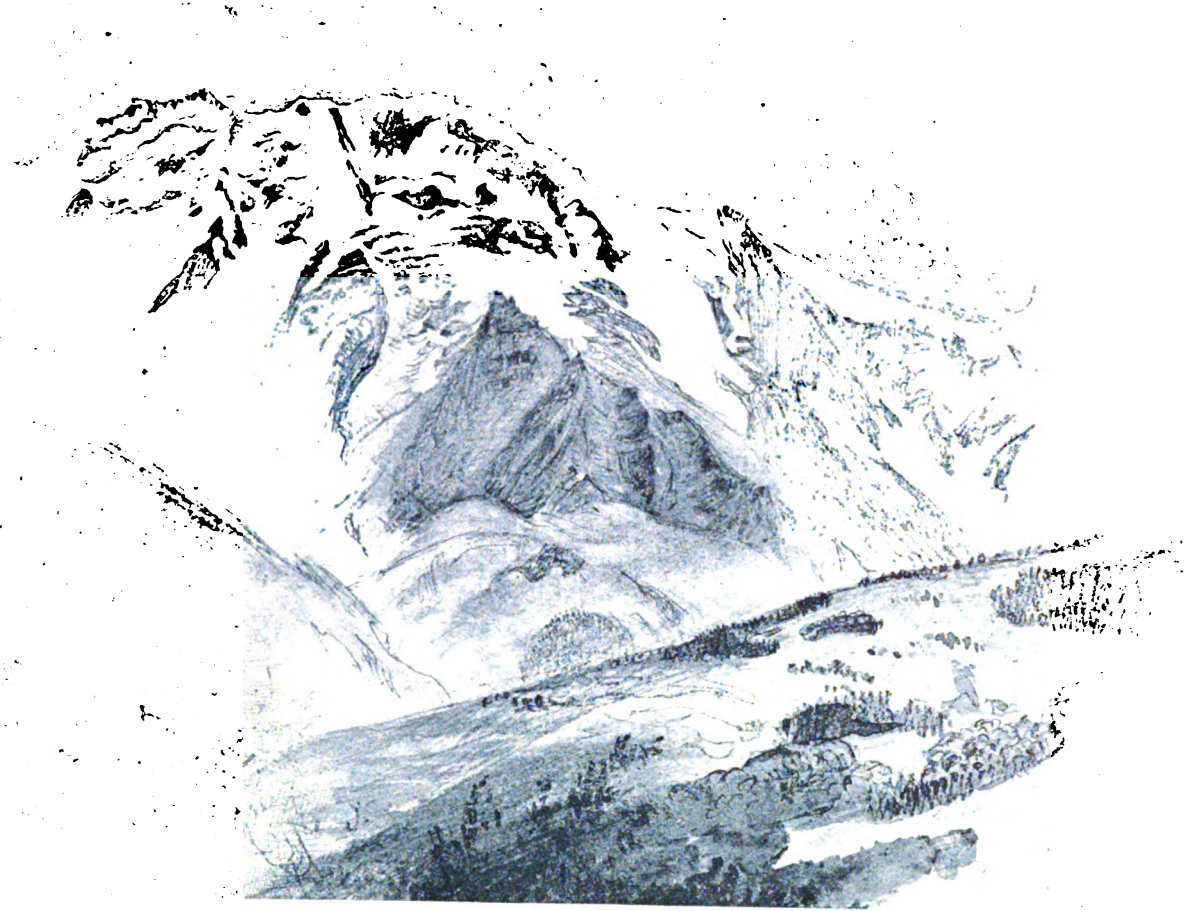

Mont Blanc de St. Gervais; from St. Martin.
1849.

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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V

Alas for man! who hath no sense
Of gratefulness nor confidence,
  But still rejects and raves;
That all God's love can scarcely win
One soul from taking pride in sin,
  And pleasure over graves.

VI

Yet let me not, like him who trod
In wrath, of old, the mount of God,
  Forget the thousands left;
Lest haply, when I seek His face,
The whirlwind of the cave replace
  The glory of the cleft.

VII

But teach me, God, a milder thought,
Lest I, of all Thy blood has bought,
  Least honourable be;
And this, that moves me to condemn,
Be rather want of love for them,
  Than jealousy for Thee.

[Age 26.]

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THE ARVE AT CLUSE[1]

HAST thou no rest, oh, stream perplexed and pale!
That thus forget'st, in thine unhallowed rage,
The pureness of thy mountain parentage?
Unprofitable power! that dost assail
The shore thou should'st refresh, and weariest
The boughs thou shouldest water; whose unrest
Strews thy white whirl with leaves untimely frail.
Fierce river! to whose strength—whose avarice—
The rocks resist not, nor the vales suffice,
Cloven and wasted: fearfully I trace
Backward thy borders, image of my race!
Who born, like thee, near Heaven, have lost, like thee,
Their heritage of peace. Roll on, thus proud,
Impatient and pollute! I would not see
Thy force less fatal, or thy path less free;
But I would cast upon thy waves the cloud
Of passions that are like thee, and baptize
My spirit from its tumult at this Gate
Of Glory, that my lifted heart and eyes,
Purged even by thee from things that desolate
Or darken, may receive, divinely given,
The radiance of that world where all is stilled
In worship, and the sacred mountains build
Their brightness of stability in Heaven.

[Age 26.]

[1] [First published in *The Keepsake* for 1846, p. 234, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, p. 278; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 313–314. No MS. of the lines is extant.]

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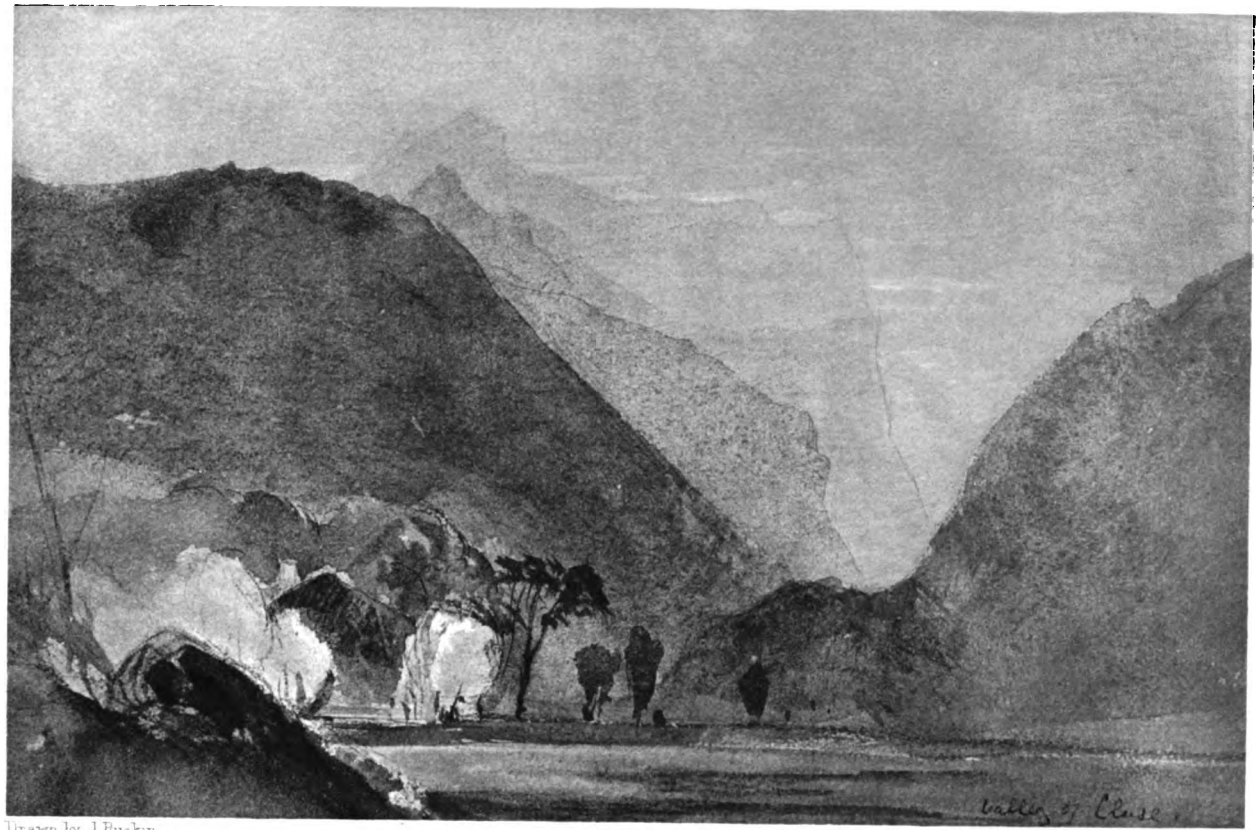

The Valley of Cluse.

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MONT BLANC[1]

He who looks upward from the vale by night,
When the clouds vanish and the winds are stayed,
For ever finds, in Heaven's serenest height,
A space that hath no stars—a mighty shade—
A vacant form, immovably displayed,
Steep in the unstable vault. The planets droop
Behind it; the fleece-laden moonbeams fade;
The midnight constellations, troop by troop,
Depart and leave it with the dawn alone:
Uncomprehended yet, and hardly known
For finite, but by what it takes away
Of the east's purple deepening into day.
Still, for a time, it keeps its awful rest,
Cold as the prophet's pile on Carmel's crest:
Then falls the fire of God.—Far off or near,
Earth and the sea, wide worshipping, descry
That burning altar in the morning sky;
And the strong pines their utmost ridges rear,
Moved like an host, in angel-guided fear
And sudden faith. So stands the Providence
Of God around us; mystery of Love!
Obscure, unchanging, darkness and defence,—
Impenetrable and unmoved above
The valley of our watch; but which shall be
The light of Heaven hereafter, when the strife
Of wandering stars, that rules this night of life,
Dies in the dawning of Eternity.

[Age 26.]

[1] [First published in *The Keepsake* for 1846, p. 35, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 279–280; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 315–316. No MS. of the lines is extant.]

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[LINES]

WRITTEN AMONG THE BASSES ALPES[1]

It is not among mountain scenery that the human intellect usually takes its finest temper, or receives its highest development; but it is at least there that we find a consistent energy of mind and body, compelled by severer character of agencies to be resisted, and hardships to be endured; and it is there that we must seek for the last remnants of patriarchal simplicity, and patriotic affection,—the few rock-fragments of manly character that are yet free from the lichenous stain of over-civilisation. It must always, therefore, be with peculiar pain that we find, as in the district to which the following verses allude, the savageness and seclusion of mountain-life, without its force and faithfulness; and all the indolence and sensuality of the most debased cities of Europe, without the polish to disguise, the temptation to excuse, or the softness of natural scenery to harmonise with them.

"Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

HAVE you in heaven no hope—on earth no care—
No foe in hell—ye things of stye and stall,
That congregate like flies, and make the air
Rank with your fevered sloth—that hourly call
The sun, which should your servant be, to bear
Dread witness on you, with uncounted wane

[1] [First published in Heath's *Book of Beauty* for 1846, pp. 109–110, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 281–282; American edition, pp. 232–233; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 317–318.

The MS. of the poem is contained in a letter to his father dated from Pisa, May 19, 1845:—

> "I send you a few verses written at Conflans, addressed to the lazy people there. I don't know whether they are fit for anything or not, but I couldn't polish them at all to my liking."

When passing through Conflans on April 15 he had written to his father:—

> "I think I never saw so vicious-looking a population. The Italians are grand at their worst, and have energy and ferocity about them, and the Aosta people have actual disease to contend with, but here is a whole townful of people rusted away by pure vicious idleness; every man you meet with a pipe in his mouth and his hands in his pockets, and a scowl on his brow, looking as if he would commit any crime if he had bodily strength to compass it, or mental energy to contemplate it; a good deal of cretinism besides, but apparently more owing to dirt and laziness than to anything in the climate."

The prefatory prose was not in the MS., to which, however, a note is added at the end:—
"I am getting into a bad habit of giving things a moral turn, which makes them sound

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And unregarded rays, from peak to peak
Of piny-gnomoned mountain moved in vain?
Behold, the very shadows that ye seek
For slumber, write along the wasted wall
Your condemnation. They forgot not, they,
Their ordered function, and determined fall,
Nor useless perish. But *you* count your day
By sins, and write your difference from clay
In bonds you break, and laws you disobey.
God! who hast given the rocks their fortitude,
The [1] sap unto the forests, and their food
And vigour to the busy tenantry
Of happy soulless things that wait on Thee,
Hast Thou no blessing where Thou gav'st Thy blood?
Wilt Thou not make Thy fair creation whole?
Behold and visit this Thy vine for good,—
Breathe in this human dust its living soul.

[Age 26.]

nasal." Ruskin's reproaches were followed by amendment, if we cannot claim that they caused it. In the very year of his visit, the two villages of L'Hôpital and Conflans, on opposite sides of the Arly, were united and re-christened Albertville, in compliment to Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, and the place has of late years risen in importance. It is uninteresting to tourists, who know it as the railway terminus of a branch from the Mont Cenis line, and the starting-point for Moutiers and the Little St. Bernard, but it has at any rate become a particularly clean and spruce little town.]

[1] [The MS. has "their," no doubt the right reading.]

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THE GLACIER[1]

THE mountains have a peace which none disturb—
The stars and clouds a course which none restrain—
The wild sea-waves rejoice without a curb,
And rest without a passion; but the chain
Of Death, upon this ghastly cliff and chasm,
Is broken evermore to bind again,
Nor lulls nor looses. Hark! a voice of pain,
Suddenly silenced;—a quick-passing spasm,
That startles rest, but grants not liberty,—
A shudder, or a struggle, or a cry—
And then sepulchral stillness. Look on us,
God! who hast given these hills their place of pride,
If Death's captivity be sleepless thus,
For those who sink to it unsanctified.

[Age 26.]

[1] [First published in Heath's *Book of Beauty* for 1846, p. 110, signed "J. R., Christ Church, Oxford." Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1850, p. 283; American edition, p. 234; *Poems*, 1891, ii. 319. In *Præterita*, iii. ch. i. § 1, Ruskin speaks of this piece as a sonnet, "though it is not a sonnet in the modern sense."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. No MS. of the lines is extant.]

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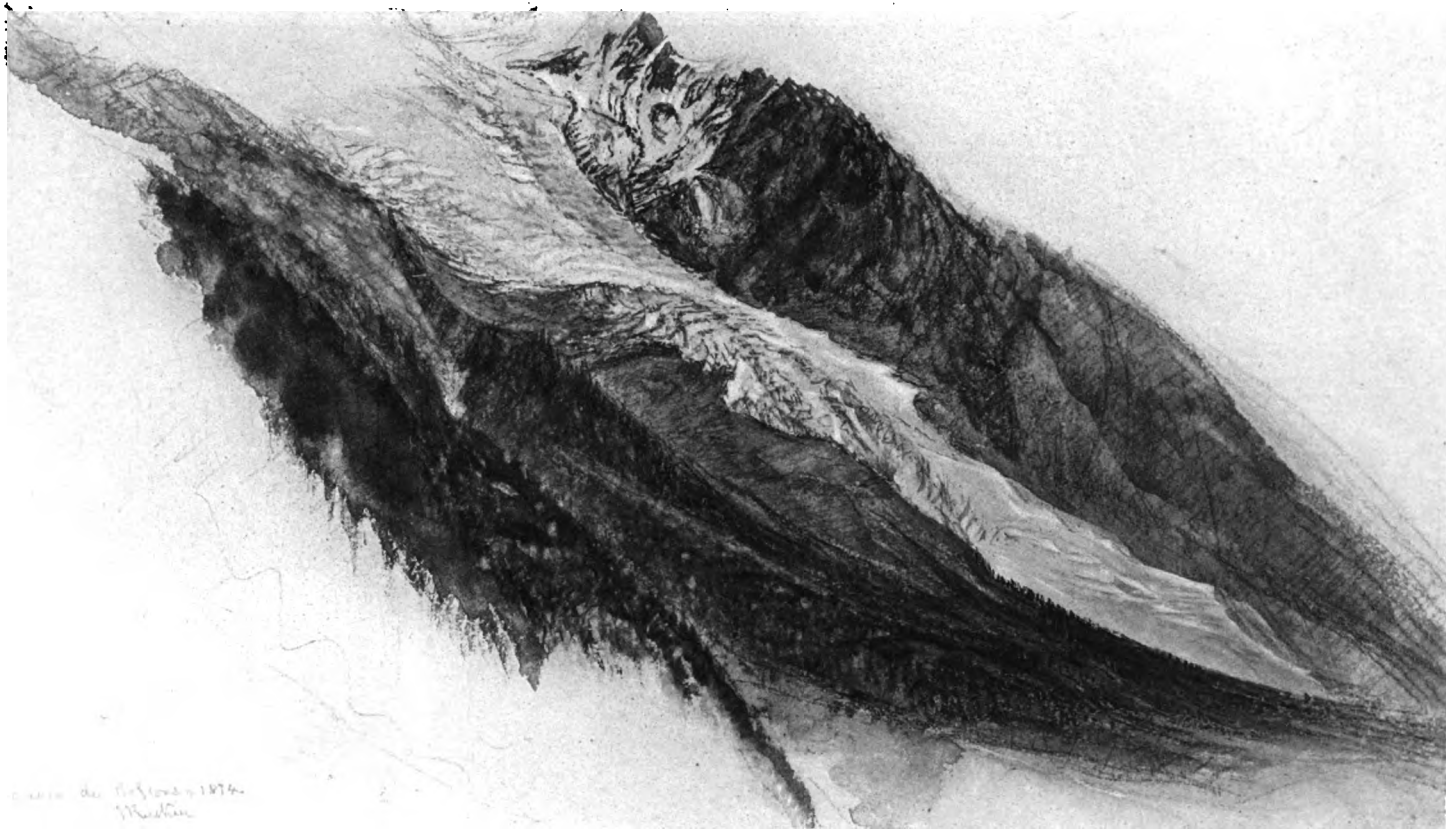

Glacier des Bossons.

1874.

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II

VERSES OF LATER YEARS

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[*Bibliographical Note.*—The three pieces in this part which have been published previously were contained in the *Poems*, 1891, for which work see p. xlv.]

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[FOR A BIRTHDAY IN MAY][1]

THORN, and meadow grass—sweet sister,
Twine them as I may,
Deemest thou a darksome garland
For thy natal day?
Thou thyself art fairer, sister,
Than all the flowers of May;
Had I brought thee buds and blossoms,
Shamed were I and they!
Think not of their grace, sweet sister,
Nor their colours gay,
Since their utmost glory, sister,
Is to pass away.

Grasses of the field, sweet sister,
And the wreaths they bind,
Though they deck the depth of summer,
Dread no winter wind.
Though the thrilling frost, sister,
Though the sleet-storm blind,
These to earth and all her creatures
Are for ever kind;
And let us remember, sister,
With a quiet mind,
Even thorns are fair, sister,
With the heaven behind.

May that happy path, sister,
Evermore be thine,
Through the mighty Shepherd's pasture
And by streams divine!

[1] [Not hitherto published. Printed from a copy in the possession of Mr. G. Allen. Written in 1847.]

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May all earthly sun, sweet sister,
On thy journeying shine,—
Though perhaps there may be, sister,
Shadows upon mine!
Kindly He for all, dear sister,
Will the end design,
Who for both our sakes, sister,
Brooked the Spear and Spine.

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AWAKE, AWAKE[1]

AWAKE! awake! the stars are pale, the east is russet gray:
They fade, behold the phantoms fade, that kept the gates of Day;
Throw wide the burning valves, and let the golden streets be free,
The morning watch is past—the watch of evening shall not be.

Put off, put off your mail, ye kings, and beat your brands to dust:
A surer grasp your hands must know, your hearts a better trust;
Nay, bend aback the lance's point, and break the helmet bar,—
A noise is on the morning winds, but not the noise of war!

[1] [One MS. of this song is a loose sheet (now inserted in MS. Book x.), on one page of which is this, entitled "1. The Peace Song," and on the other, a second poem, "2. The Zodiac Song." Both were written about 1865, as also were the additional verses to Sir Walter Scott's song (p. 248), for the school at Winnington, the scene of *The Ethics of the Dust* (see volume containing that book). Ruskin had intended to print the "Peace Song" in an account of Winnington in *Præterita*, among the proofs for which it remains. It is there printed in short lines, eight instead of four to the stanza, and there are several alterations:—

Stanza i. line 2, "fade" is corrected in pencil to "fail."
,, i. line 3, reads "Unbind the Gentile's bonds and set The Syrian's children free.'
,, ii. line 3, the print has "rend" (instead of "bend"), altered in pencil to "break."
,, iii. line 1, "Behold along the mountain paths."
,, iii. line 3, a note is added: "Our enemy's victory as well as our own. 'Yea, in all these things we are *more* than conquerors, through Him that loved us.'"
,, v. lines 1, 2, "And honour binds the brow of man,
And faithfulness his breast,—
Far hath he set our sins from us
As East is from the West,
For aye, the time," etc.

The MS. in Book x. has "bid" for "let" in stanza i. line 3, and "For aye" for "Behold" in stanza v. line 3.

"These lines (the *Præterita* MS. explains) were written to be sung by those who could sing to the dancing of those who could dance, chosen among the girls who had feeling and sound practice in such mysteries at the school of Winnington, near Northwich Cheshire, between the years 1855 and 1858" (error for 1865–68).]

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Among the grassy mountain paths the glittering troops increase:
They come! they come!—how fair their feet—they come that publish peace!
Yea, Victory! fair Victory! our enemies' and ours,
And all the clouds are clasped in light, and all the earth with flowers.

Ah! still depressed and dim with dew, but yet a little while,
And radiant with the deathless rose the wilderness shall smile,
And every tender living thing shall feed by streams of rest,
Nor lamb shall from the fold be lost, nor nursling from the nest.

For aye, the time of wrath is past, and near the time of rest,
And honour binds the brow of man, and faithfulness his breast,—
Behold, the time of wrath is past, and righteousness shall be,
And the Wolf is dead in Arcady, and the Dragon in the sea!

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THE ZODIAC SONG[1]

1. *Aries* (sings). Horn for weapon, and wool for shield,
   Windy weather and lambs afield.
2. *Taurus* . . Head in the sunshine, hoof in the hay,
   Toss the last of the clouds away.
3. *Gemini* . . Double in leaf and double in light,
   Flowers by day, and stars by night.
4. *Cancer* . . Cancer, Cancer, crooked and black,
   Answer us, answer us—Forward or back?
5. *Leo* . . . Fierce at eve, at morning tame,
   Crest of cloud, and claws of flame.
6. *Virgo* . . Sickle in hand, and sandal on feet,
   Crowned with poppy, and swathed with wheat.
7. *Libra* . . . Libra, Libra, truth is treasure,
   Fair the weight and full the measure.
8. *Scorpio* . . Sharp the sting, but grand the grief,
   Shivering bough, and burning leaf.
9. *Sagittarius* . Numb the finger: narrow the mark,
   Frost on the feather, and flight in the dark.
10. *Capricorn* . Capricorn, Capricorn,
    Cowardly heart, and crumpled horn.
11. *Aquarius* . Snow to flicker, or rain to fall,
    Down with thy pitcher, and out with it all.
12. *Pisces* . . . Fish, little fish, lying head to tail,
    Daisies round the dish and a pearl on every scale.

[1] [Not hitherto printed, see preceding note.]

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"TWIST YE, TWINE YE"[1]

Twist ye, twine ye! even so
Mingle shades of Joy and Woe,
Hope and Fear, and Peace and Strife,
In the thread of human life.

While the mystic twist is spinning,
And the infant's life beginning,
Dimly seen through twilight bending,
Lo! what varied shapes attending!

Passion's force, by Patience knit;
Doubtful Reason reined by Wit;
Toil,—forgot in sighing Rest,
Joy,—we know not which is best.

Earnest Gladness, idle Fretting,
Foolish Memory, wise Forgetting;
And trusted reeds, that broken lie,
Wreathed again for melody.

Ah! the deep, the tender playing,
Worded Silence, unmeant Saying,
Ah! sweet Anger, insincere,
Trembling Kiss, and glittering Tear.

[1] [An expansion, written for the school at Winnington, of Meg Merrilees' song (*Guy Mannering*, ch. iv.). The first two stanzas and the last are Scott's; Ruskin expanded Scott's third stanza—

"Passions wild, and follies vain,
Pleasures soon exchanged for pain;
Doubt, and Jealousy, and Fear,
In the magic dance appear"—

into five of his own.]

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Vanished Truth, but Vision staying;
Fairy riches—lost in weighing;
And fitful grasp of flying Fate,
Touched too lightly, traced too late.

Graceful Pride, and timid Praise,
Love, diffused a thousand ways;
Faithful Hope, and generous Fear,
In the mystic dance appear.

Now they wax and now they dwindle,
Whirling with the whirling spindle.
Twist ye, twine ye!—even so
Mingle human bliss and woe.

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[*Bibliographical Note.*—Most of the verses in this part have been previously published in the *Poems*, 1891, for which see above, p. xlv. A revised version of "On Skiddaw and Derwent Water" is here reprinted from *The Spiritual Times* (see p. 265). Additional passages from poems already partly published are printed from the MSS.; such additions are in the following pages specified in footnotes (see *e.g.* pp. 286, 340). The following pieces have not hitherto been printed: "Verona" (p. 439), "The World of the Sky" (p. 444), "A Moment's Falter" (p. 465), and "Marcolini" (pp. 474–516).]

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FIRST VERSES: 1826

(AT 7 YEARS OF AGE)

[INTRODUCTION TO EDITION OF 1891][1]

THERE is always a peculiar interest in watching development, in witnessing growth. When we have seen a plant burst the soil, and its long-expected bud unfold into blossom, we love every leaf and petal of it: it is our own; and worth more to us than all the cut bouquets of a flower-show. And in the same way we delight in the early history of nations,—in the early biography of great men. As we follow their first steps, and note the foreshadowings of character, the promises of power, which even their youngest years afford, they become our own by sympathy: and when they reach the day of victory and coronation, we seem, like loyal adherents of a conqueror, to share the triumph; and, like intimate confidants, to understand the full significance of the achievement.

It is no idle curiosity, then, that prompts the admirers of Mr. Ruskin's works to collect his boyish writings and to learn the story of his youth. More than other writers, he is misunderstood by the casual reader: more than others, he needs to be approached—I do not say with any prejudice in his favour—but with a preliminary understanding of his ways, and aims, and attitude: and in his case, more than with others, these conditions have been determined at an early age, and illustrated in his early writings. That is the recurrent burden of his autobiography: "I find in myself nothing whatsoever *changed*. Some of me is dead, more of me is stronger. I have learned a few things, forgotten many: in the total of me, I am but the same youth, disappointed and rheumatic."[2]

These poems, although he thrust them aside for prose, in which he could better put the complicated feelings, thoughts, and facts which he had to tell,—these poems are, for that very reason, the best introduction to his later and greater books. They sketch the author's portrait, as frontispiece to his works. They give, in the simple and direct terms to which lyrical or elegiac verse is limited, the ground-plan of his character,—the bias of his mental development. They bring before us, from year to year, his home and surroundings, his studies and travels,—authentic memoirs of a curiously observant childhood, in themselves valuable as records of bygone times and old-world personages. They hint the models upon which he formed his style: and the reader who is not tied down to admire whatever affectation may be fashionable, of formality or of extravagance, will find among these hitherto unknown pieces much that will surprise him by its literary value. I count it for nothing against them

[1] [Reprinted from the *Poems*, 1891, vol. i. pp. xix.–xxviii. By the editor of that edition, Mr. W. G. Collingwood.]

[2] [*Præterita*, i. ch. xii. § 246.]

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when frightened was the dog just then
at the scratching of a hen
so of[f] he ran and little mouse
was left in safety with her house.

But these childish verses were not by any means merely derivative, as the author seems to hint in the passage quoted from *Præterita*. His continuation of "Harry and Lucy," though it imitates Miss Edgeworth's form, is in great part the story of his own travels; and two of the "poems" of this year, 1826, record the impressions received during a journey from Scotland with his parents, after visiting his aunt at Perth. Of the one "On Scotland," line four is no doubt a reminiscence of the May sunshine in which they went northwards; for their start was usually made about the middle of May; and he contrasts the sunny anticipation of the arrival with the autumnal gloom of the departure.

ON SCOTLAND[1]

O what a change from pretty Perth so near,
To dreary heather, and to streams so clear,—
To rocks, and stones. Upon the dreary way
No sun is shining, as on sprightly May.
Again it changes to the winding Earn,—
'Tis shallow water, but it has no fern;
But it is precious for its shining drops;
And sometimes from the river a fish pops.
Again it changes to a steep, steep hill,
And it is cold, do anything you will.
In short, such changes Scotland does now take,
That I can't tell them, and I quickly end.[2]

A not uncommon formula of termination in these first attempts, like the "these things were thus" with which Herodotus concludes his chapters. Note in passing, as a matter of style, the use of "precious" to describe the peculiar, unhackneyed beauty of a pet phenomenon.

During the journey home, or on his return, in September, was written a poem on "Glenfarg," which is extremely curious as a foretaste of that common to both pieces. "Ragland (*sic*) Castle," however, shows already a certain interest in architecture:—

"O Ragland, beauty as you are,
Ruined arches, towers and views,
Not ruined views but fine ones,
Your Gothic arches and your falling towers,
With keystones, moats and drawbridges,
Your mice-house moss and burnt up grass
For mice to pull and line their falling dwellings,
Your spiral towers and holes for mice to live in,
Your dungeons, splits and drawbridges,
Battlements, courts, and lodges,—
So, Ragland, as I have described you,
I must take leave of you."]

[1] [Entitled in the 1891 ed. "Farewell to Scotland."]
[2] [In the 1891 ed. this line ran, "That I can't tell them, and an end I make."]

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moralisation of landscape which is so characteristic of the author. It is interesting, also, from the precocious power of consecutive thought and condensed imagery, by which the little boy of seven rises in gradual climax from the river, in which he sees typified the mere "glory of going on and still to be" in the darkness of the ravine,—to the streams on the hill-side, whose energy he fancies to be conscious of ministration to their fellow-creatures. From the streams, he ascends to the stones in them, which are called upon for a higher lesson,—to "bear" trial,—for he that endureth to the end shall "never, never die." But what in the stones is a virtue is a defect in living creatures; for he sees the cattle live and move and have a fuller being; and the sheep still more so. And finally, man—proud of his earthly science, of the mill-wheel to which he trusts for his daily bread—is reproved for the lowness of his horizon, and exhorted to lift up his eyes to the wheel of the heavenly wain;—reminded of his fallible nature, and pointed to his true guide and goal, above.

GLEN OF GLENFARG

Glen of Glenfarg, thy beauteous rill,
Streaming through thy mountains high,
Onward pressing, onward still,
Hardly seeing the blue sky.

Mountain streams, press on your way,
And run into the stream below:
Never stop like idle clay,—
Hear the sheep, and cattle low.

Stones that in the stream do lie,
Bear the rushing torrent still:
—Thou shalt never, never die,
—Submit unto the Almighty's will.

Cows that lie upon the grass,
Rise and graze upon the hills;
Never be a heavy mass,
Like a stone that's in the rills.

Sheep that eat upon the hills,
Rise, and play, and jump about;
Drink out of the running rills,
And always on the grass be out.

Cottages upon the plain,
Placed so near the floury mills;
Cottager, look on Charles's Wain,
Right above the grassy hills.

The pole-star guides thee on the way,
When in dark nights thou art [lost];
Therefore look up at the starry day,
Look at the stars about thee tost.[1]

[1] [The author's father added the date "Sept. 1826."]

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The word in square brackets is wanting in the original. In the verses previously unedited, which nearly equal in bulk the already published poems, the few words that I have supplied or altered are marked in the same way, as also any notes or dates I have inserted. . . . But while I have not taken liberties in the way of emending the original MSS., my instructions obliged me to omit such poems and passages as were either without general interest, or incomplete and inadequately representative of the author's attainments and style at the time; as must often be the case in verses written only in the rough, and never revised for publication. How completely unpolished the MSS. are may be gathered from the fact that they contain hardly a trace of punctuation. On the other hand, the spelling rarely needs correction.

The last piece of 1826 was a New Year's Address to the author's father, written apparently on December 31, as an essay to order; and, like other "commissions," without afflatus of inspiration. Shall I print it?—or "discreetly blot"? I think Mr. Ruskin's fame will survive editorial indiscretion;—and "'tis sixty years since," you know,—and more. Besides, the "poem" is meant to be humorous.

TIME. BLANK VERSE[1]

Papa, what's Time?—a figure or a sense?
—'Tis one, but not the other.—Is not Time
A figure? yes, it is: for on the tops of shops
We often see a figure with two wings,
A scythe upon one shoulder, and a lock
Of hair upon his forehead, while his head is bald,
Except the lock upon his forehead;—and called Time.
Time's very quick; and therefore he has wings.
When past, Time's gone for ever; so he has a lock
Of hair upon his forehead; and the proverb is
"Take Time by his[2] forelock." He mows down everything,
And so he has a scythe. Time is so quick
That might a year be called a day.
—Day!—Now I think of it, 'tis New Year's day.—
A happy New Year's day to you, Papa!
—And now I must return to Time.
Is Time only a figure? No, he is not.
What is he then?—what is he?—I don't know;
He's not a quality; of that I'm sure.
—Oh I remember now! He is a god
Entitled Saturn! he's a heathen god.
And well he might be called one: none but they
Could go so quick, or jump from 'tween our hands

[1] [Of this piece, there are two copies among the MSS.—a rough draft (iii.) and a fair copy (iA). Both MSS. have "*time*" not "*Time*," and no punctuation. The fair copy is dated "John Ruskin, seven years, eleven months. Jan. 1. 1827."]

[2] [So in both the MSS.; in the ed. of 1891, "the."]

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As Time does. Time! I'm quite away from him!
Away from him? No surely I'm not so;
For I'm at heathen gods, and he's a god:
So though I may be from him, I'm not far
From him, and now I must go to him quite.
—'Tis but an hour to merry New Year's day:
For, though it is a day,—a day's an hour;
And what's an hour,—'tis only a wee minute,
Made so by the quick course of time.
—So, Mr. Time, as I've said all about you,
All I've to say, I must take leave of you!

It is droll as it stands; a very little touching up would have regulated the rhythm and emphasised the grotesque humour of the monologue. The lad who, at the age of seven, could knock this off without effort, and throw it aside as a failure, was certainly taking time by the forelock;—father to the man who engraved upon his seal, "To-day, To-day, To-day." And is it not characteristic that he should be already puzzling over the metaphysical nature of Time, and, even though humorously, asking questions that it took a Kant to answer? Not long after, he goes on to attempt an epic "On the Universe." Surely this might have been Browning's youngster with his "Transcendentalism; a poem in twelve books;" surely to this boy with "What a poetical face!"—as Keats' Severn said of him[1]—might have been addressed the admiring remonstrance, condensing all possible criticism:—

"You are a poem, though your poem's naught.
The best of all you showed before, believe,
Was your own boy-face o'er the finer chords
Bent, following the cherub at the top
That points to God with his paired half-moon wings."

And to him surely, when the full time was come, the prophetic advice was appropriate,—how appropriate, with its Alpine metaphor!—

"Speak prose, and hollo it till Europe hears!
The six-foot Swiss tube, braced about with bark,
Which helps the hunter's voice from Alp to Alp—
Exchange our harp for that,—who hinders you?"

But while recognising that Mr. Ruskin's power lay in other directions, it would be a mistake unduly to depreciate these volumes of juvenile verses. They contain many a sonorous line and noble thought, many a genuine feeling and fine, enthusiastic description that already

"Buries us with a glory, young once more,
Pouring heaven into this shut house of life."[2]

[1] [*Præterita*, ii. ch. ii. § 36.]
[2] [The three passages above quoted are from Browning's "Transcendentalism" (in *Men and Women*).]

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VERSES OF 1827[1]

(AT THE AGE OF 8 YEARS)

THE SUN[2]

THOU Sun, thou golden Sun, in beauty rise,
And show thy yellow face among the clouds;
Disperse the stars, and make bright morning come!
Break through the clouds, and let thy golden beams
Shine on the earth! The birds, arising, sing
To hail the approach of thee. At the hot noon
Oft have I worked to make my garden nice,
Till, when I stopped, the drops of perspiration
Fell from my brows. In the sweet afternoon
The air is balmy; in that pleasant time
Oft have I walked, with dear Mamma beside me,
To watch the flowers growing, and to play

[1] [The two pieces here given under this date occur in the MS. Book No. iii.; they are written in printed letters, in ink. In the ed. of 1891 "Glenfarg" was printed first; but in the MS. it follows "The Sun," which has Jan. 1, 1828, as date. In the fair copy made for the author's father (MS. Book No. xi.), the two pieces are on one sheet, dated Jan. 1, 1828, "The Sun" again coming first. Of course, both pieces were written in 1827. "The Sun" must have been specially composed for presentation on the New Year's Day next following; "Glenfarg" seems to have been selected by the young author as the best specimen of his stock in hand—a selection which there is no reason to challenge; the other pieces of 1827 need not therefore be given.

Ruskin's longest poetical exercise in 1827 (not 1828, as stated in the ed. of 1891) was a versification of Scott's *Monastery*, a result of his visit to Scotland in that year. "I used," he says, "to read the *Monastery* in Glen Farg, which I confused with 'Glendearg'" (*Præterita*, i. ch. i. § 5). The opening lines are as follow:—

> "White lady, white lady, sing on in the glen
> Of Glendarg, but do not do ill to men;
> Many a haunt and many a nook,
> Many a thought and many a look,
> Has been reported of that place," etc., etc.

The exercise was not finished; it was planned, as usual with Ruskin, on a scale too large for his completion; but some 400 lines were written. Of the same date is a versification of "The Constellations," in which the boy enrols himself among "sky-loving men." The other piece of the year is the first draft of "The Ship": see below, p. 264.]

[2] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, i. pp. 5–6; the last twelve lines of this piece, which appear both in the MS. book and in the fair copy, were, however, omitted.]

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Upon the green.[1] Then comes the evening dark,
In which all nature quiet still remains.
When seven of these are past, a week is gone;
And four of these a month do constitute;
And twelve of these the long, long year do make.
But yet not all the year doth pass without
Some festivals; and some of these I'll name:—
First, solemn Easter comes; then Whitsunday;
Then Christmas,—New Year's Day.—
And New Year's Day it is! Therefore, Papa,
I must wish you a Happy New Year's Day!
And now a little description of the sun.
The sun when first he rises is so bright
That nobody on him can look, for if they did,
Struck by his brightness blind they would be made.
In the hot noon invisible he is,
Save by the brightness round him, to the eye.
In afternoon golden and silvery is he;
And in dark evening he is not to be seen
Though his attendants are: the moon comes first,
Then evening star Orion, and the plough,
Then great bear, lesser, and the northern crown,
And having named these I end this poem.

[1] [See *Præterita*, i. ch. iii. § 66.]

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GLENFARG [1]

PAPA, how pretty those icicles are,
That are seen so near, that are seen so far;
—Those dropping waters that come from the rocks,
And many a hole, like the haunt of a fox;
That silvery stream that runs babbling along,
Making a murmuring, dancing song;
Those trees that stand waving upon the rock's side,
And men, that, like spectres, among them glide;
And waterfalls that are heard from far,
And come in sight when very near;
And the water-wheel that turns slowly round,
Grinding the corn that requires to be ground; [2]
And mountains at a distance seen,
And rivers winding through the plain;
And quarries with their craggy stones,
And the wind among them moans.[3]

[1] [First printed by Ruskin in *The Queen of the Air* (§ 112), where he says that the "childish rhyme" was written "on a frosty day in Glen Farg, just north of Loch Leven." Ruskin had spent the summer of 1827 in Scotland, staying with his uncle and aunt (Jessie), Mr. and Mrs. Peter Richardson of Bridgend, Perth (see *Præterita*, i. ch. iii.). Ruskin quoted these verses in *The Queen of the Air*, to show how early his bent had declared itself. Reprinted in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 3–4.]

[2] ["Political Economy of the Future."—Author's note in *Queen of the Air*.]

[3] ["So foretelling *Stones of Venice*, and this essay on Athena."—Author's note in *Queen of the Air*.]

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1828

(AT THE AGE OF 9 YEARS)

MAY

[BIRTHDAY ADDRESS TO HIS FATHER][1]

Joyous, joyous, joyous May!
Let us dance the hours away,
When you appear
But once a year,
Then dost thou bring a happy day.
Then on the green
Dance in a ring
Many a little elf and fay.

Flowers spring up beneath thy feet;
Greenest velvet is thy seat;
Sunny rays
Round thee blaze,
With temperate and pleasant heat.
Come away,
Happy May,
Where all that's good and pleasant meet!

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 9–10, but the first stanza, which occurs in both MSS., was not given; contained in MS. Book ii., belonging to the first half of 1828. After them comes the conclusion of a Birthday Letter to his father (given in the ed. of 1891): ". . . a letter on your birthday, but this is merely wasting paper when there is no need for it. But, papa, alas! I have just been up to mama, and she says not to make such a long letter. So, papa, good-bye, Mr. Papa, your affectionate son, John Ruskin." These verses were afterwards fair-copied with others into a small paper book, now bound up in MS. Book v., with the following "title-page" to them :—"Battle of Waterloo | A Play in two Acts, | With other small | Poems | Dedicated to his Father. By John Ruskin, | 1829. | Hernhill, | Dulwich." This was probably presented to his father on his birthday in 1829. The play is in blank verse. There are also a "Ballad of Waterloo" and a "Song of Waterloo": the boy had been taken over the battlefield in 1825 (see Vol. I. p. xxv.). The "small poems" are (besides "May") a "Description of an Afternoon," and the lines "On Skiddaw and Derwent Water." Other pieces of the year include some lines on "A Rainbow," and

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Much happier thou indeed to me,
For thou papa's birthday doth see.
With that thou might
Be Zembla's night,
And yet be quite as fair to me
As now thou art.
My happy heart
Beats, at the thought of spending thee.

Not thee, May,—though indeed thou'rt fair,
'Tis for my father's [1] birthday that I care;
That happy day
When joined with May
Is joyous more than all the year.
Come away,
Joyous May,
Good and happy, sweet and fair.

May 10.

two or three fragments in which the boy wrestles with the problem of the beauty of nature and the unhappiness of man. A more ambitious undertaking commenced in this year was "Eudosia" (see below, p. 269). To this year belongs also the second draft of a piece entitled "The Ship," begun in 1827 and recast and enlarged in 1828–29.

The following extract and comments were given as an editor's note, 1891 (i. 270):—

"Under the instructions which have been given him, the editor prints only such verses as are of sufficient completeness to stand alone. Birthday Addresses usually need lopping to be presentable as 'poems'; and the right place to print these fragments *in extenso*, if ever this be called for, would be in a detailed biography. One piece contains some lines appreciating the British man-of-war, as in *Harbours of England*, and too prophetic of *The Crown of Wild Olive* to be altogether omitted:—

'Those sails that sometimes pleasing zephyrs fill,
And sometimes Boreas blows with all his force,
Now at the present time look fair and sweet;
But who can tell the future in a day?
Perhaps those sails are tattered rags, shot through
With many a ball,—half dropping off their yards.
—Then those destructive rows of huge machines,—
Destructive in their making,—in their use!
O War, what causes thee, the curse of man?
'Tis avarice and ambition, kindred vices;
'Tis vice, not war, that is the curse of man.'"

To this year belongs lastly the New Year's gift to his father, dated December 31, 1828, which is here (as in the illustrated ed. of 1891) facsimiled as a specimen of handwriting: see plate facing this page. The following plate is a facsimile of the lines (entitled in the ed. of 1891, i. 271, "Highland Music") which accompanied the letter. Ruskin's father added a note to these lines: "See Chronicles of the Canongate; the Flute and Drum and Bagpipe; the latter having no beauty."]

[1] [In the *Poems* of 1891, "'Tis for his birthday that I care."]

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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

My dear papa

A good Newyear to you. I at first intended to make for your Newyears present a small model of any easily done thing and I thought I would try to make an orrery but at length I gave it up on considering how many different things were wanted and composed the inclosed poem with another short address to you but Mamma disliking my address and telling me to write a small letter to you I attempted though I will not say I have succeeded to do it which thing I hope you will accept however unworthy it be of your notice

dear papa
your affectionate son
John Ruskin

Hamilt
December thirty first 1828

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UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

My dear papa

A good Newyear to you. I at first intended to make for your Newyears present a small model of any easily done thing and I thought I would try to make an orrery but at length I gave it up on considering how many different things were wanted and composed the inclosed poem with another short address to you but Mamma disliking my address and telling me to write a small letter to you I attempted though I will not say I have succeeded to do it which thing I hope you will accept however unworthy it be of your notice

dear papa
your affectionate son
John Ruskin

Hurstmonceaux
December thirty first 1828

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But frightened was the preacher when
He heard all echoed down the glen
The music of the clans
Twas martial music and around
Well echoed was the beauteous sound
By valley rock and hill
It died away upon the ear
And spread abroad now there now here
And gathered strength again
And now the flute and now the drum
Mingling upon the wind they come
And die away again
Another strain another sound
And now tis silence all around
The martial music's gone.

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But frightened was the preacher when
He heard all echoed down the glen
The music of the clans
Twas martial music and around
Well echoed was the beauteous sound
By valley rock and hill
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And die away again
Another strain another sound
And now tis silence all around
The martial music's gone.

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ON SKIDDAW AND DERWENT WATER[1]

Skiddaw! upon thy cliffs the sun shines bright;
Yet only for a moment: then gives place
Unto a playful cloud, which on thy brow
Sports wantonly, soon melting into air;
But shadowing first thy side of broken green,
And making more intense the sun's return.
Then, in the morning, on thy head those clouds
Rest, as upon a couch, and give fair scope
To fancy's play; and airy fortresses,
Towers, banners, spears and battlements appear
Chasing the others off; and in their turn
Are vanquished too, dissolving like the mould
That's trampled by the foot of urchin boy;
And, rolling down, though once so firmly bound
By roots tenacious, while the upward spoiler
Climbs on to invade the hidden eagle's nest.
Skiddaw! majestic, a giant-nature's work,
Though less than Andes, or the Alpine heights,
Yet pyramids to thee are nothing, they at best
Are but gigantic tombs,—the work of art.
Proud nature makes no tombs, save where the snow—
The fleecy locks of winter fall around,
A mausoleum for the careless swain;
Or where the ocean swallows navies down,

[1] [These verses are the earliest printed work of Ruskin. They first appeared in *The Spiritual Times: a Monthly Magazine* (London: printed for D. Freeman, 52 Paternoster Row), No. X., February 1830, pp. 72–73. They were signed "R.," and differ very considerably from the MS. versions. It is possible that Ruskin's father or the editor touched them up for publication. In the *Poems*, 1891, i. 11–14, the verses were printed from the MSS.; the text here is that of *The Spiritual Times*, the variations being given in notes. The draft MS. of the lines is in Book ii., and a fair copy in Book v. In the latter (1829), as also in *The Spiritual Times*, the two sets of verses, on Skiddaw and Derwent Water respectively, are run together, as here printed; in the ed. of 1891 they were printed separately. "Skiddaw" and "Derwent Water," written in 1828, must have been based on memories of the visit to the Lakes in 1826. They are the verses of a boy of nine, recording impressions received at seven. Mr. Frederic Harrison, quoting the greater part of the address to Skiddaw, remarks: "We might pick out of the *Excursion* many a duller passage than this; and it would not be easy to pick a single passage that would show the same precise and minute watching of the clouds on a mountain, as with the eye of the painter—the same pictorial distinctness" (*John Ruskin*, in the "English Men of Letters" series, 1902, p. 21).]

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Or yawning earthquake covers cities vast,
Shroudless, engulfed, without a knell or tear;
Or where another Herculaneum falls;
Or the great day of fire the general grave.
These are the tombs she makes, and buries all
Beneath them, but the soul; that, . . . scorns the dust.

Now Derwent Water come!—a looking-glass
Wherein reflected are the mountain's heights;
For thou'rt a mirror, framed in rocks and woods.
Upon thee, seeming mounts arise, and trees
And seeming rivulets, that charm the eye;
All on thee painted by a master hand,
Which not a critic can well criticise.
But to disturb thee oft, bluff Eolus
Descends upon thy heath-top with his breath;
Thy polished surface is a boy at play,
Who labours at the snow to make a man,
And when he's made it, he strikes it into ruin.
So when thou'st made a picture, thou dost play
At tearing it to pieces. Trees do first
Tremble, as if a monstrous heart of oak
Were but an aspen leaf, and then as if
It were a cobweb in the tempest.
Thus like Penelope thou weav'st a web,
And then thou dost undo it; thou'rt like her
Because thou'rt fair and full of labour too.[1]

[1] [The following is the version of the above lines as it appears in the MS. fair copy :—

Skiddaw, upon thy heights the sun shines bright,
But only for a moment: then gives place
Unto a playful cloud which on thy brow
Sports wantonly,—then floats away in air,
Throwing its shadow on thy towering height;
And, darkening for a moment thy green side,
But adds unto its beauty, as it makes
The sun more bright when it again appears.
Thus in the morning on thy brow those clouds
Rest as upon a couch, and give fair scope
For fancy's play, and airy fortresses,
And towers, battlements, and all appear
Chasing each other off, and in their turn
Are chasèd by the others. But enough
I've treated of the clouds. Now Skiddaw come,
Noble, and grand, and beauteous, clothed with green,
And yet but scantily. And in some parts
A bare, terrific cliff precipitate
Descends, with only here and there a bush,
A straggler with its roots fixed in the stone
And bare and scraggy as befits the soil.
Skiddaw, majestic! Giant Nature's work!

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Lower than Alps or Andes. Pyrenees
Are all much higher. But those works of Art,
Those giant works of Art, with thee compared,
Sink into nothing; all that Art can do
Is nothing beside thee. The touch of man
Raised pigmy mountains, but gigantic tombs.
The touch of Nature raised the mountain's brow,
But made no tombs at all, save where the snow—
The fleecy locks of winter fall around
And form a frail memorial for the swain
Who wanders far from home, and meets his death
Amidst the cold of winter. But no more
On this sad subject on this happy day.

Now Derwent Water come!—a looking-glass
Wherein reflected are the mountain's heights,
As in a mirror, framed in rocks and woods;
So upon thee there is a seeming mount,
A seeming tree, a seeming rivulet.
All upon thee are painted by a hand
Which not a critic can well criticise.
But to disturb thee oft, bluff Eolus
Descends upon the mountains, with his breath,
Thy polished surface is a boy at play
Who labours at the snow to make a man,
And when he's made it, knocks it down again;—
So when thou'st made a picture thou dost play
At tearing it to pieces. Trees do first
Tremble, as if a monstrous heart of oak
Were but an aspen leaf; and then as if
It were a cobweb in the tempest's blow.
Thus like Penelope thou weav'st a web
And then thou dost undo it. Thou'rt like her
Because thou'rt fair, and oft deceiving too.

Sweet Derwent, on thy winding shore,
Beside thy mountain forests hoar,
There would I like to wander still,
And drink from out the rippling rill,
Which from thy mountain-head doth fall
And mingles with the eagles' call;
While on Helvellyn's thunder roars,
Re-echoed by all Derwent's shores;
And where the lightning flashes still,
Reflected in the mountain rill.

The version in the *Poems*, 1891 (founded on the somewhat illegible draft in MS. Book ii.), shows several variations from this MS. fair copy: *e.g.* line 10, "vain" instead of "fair"; lines 14, 15, read—

"Are chasèd by the others.
Skiddaw came;"

lines 18–21 read—

"A bare, terrific cliff precipitous
Descends, with only here and there a root,
A straggler, pushing forth its branches stiff";

lines 23 and 24 were omitted; at line 25 a footnote was added from the first MS.,

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explaining that "those giant works of Art" meant "The Pyramids"; line 32 reads—

"The snow
(The fleecy locks of winter) falls around,
And forms a white tomb for the careless swain";

after line 35 the lines were broken off, and the address to Derwent Water was given as a separate piece; after line 55 the first MS. of these lines adds :—

"First seeming to be calm, then turning rough,
And thus deceiving as Penelope.
And now, Penelope, and all, good-bye,
My muse, I have no further need of thee."

The ed. of 1891 printed the first two of these lines. Lines 61–63 reads "Helvellyn" for "Helvellyn's," "from old Derwent's shores," and "while" for "where."]

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EUDOSIA[1]

BOOK II

I SING the Pine, which clothes high Switzer's[2] head,
And high enthroned, grows on a rocky bed,
On gulfs so deep, on cliffs that are so high,
He that would dare to climb them dares to die.

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 15–19 (but see below). The MSS. of "Eudosia" are three: (*a*) MS. Book iv., which contains it all. There is a title-page which reads as follows: "Eudosia, Or | A poem | On the | Universe | By John Ruskin | Vol. I. | 'These are Thy glorious works, parent of good | Almighty! thine this universal frame, | Thus wondros (*sic*) fair.' | Milton | Botany | Hern Hill | Dulwich. |" On the first page of the poem is the date "September 28, 1828." (*b*) MS. Book ii. (1828) contains an earlier draft of some portions. (*c*) Among some loose MSS. (now Book iA) there is a fair copy, dated February 8, 1830, of the eighteen lines on "The Yew" (see below, p. 271). In printing the verses here, the editors have collated these three MSS. The quotation from Milton explains that the title denotes the "good gifts" of creation.

Of Book I. Ruskin gave some extracts, with a general account of the poem as being "the real beginning at once of *Deucalion* and *Proserpina*," in *Præterita*, i. ch. iii. §§ 66, 67. For those extracts, the reader is referred to that place.

"The rest of it is simply a versified catalogue of flowers and trees; perorating, however, in a description of the oak and its uses, not without a touch of epic feeling:—

'Now the broad Oak displays its arms around:
Its brawny branches, spreading, sweep the ground;
Its kingly arms their giant strength display,—
With their great breadth e'en hide the face of day,
Broad round the mother-trunk they throw their arms,
And dare encounter dreadful war's alarms.
To their assistance England owes her strength;
The spoils of nations come from their dread length.
Of them are formèd England's wooden walls;
With them surrounded, England loves Mars' calls. . . .
In vain the waves attempt to break their sides,
And to o'erwhelm them with the rushing tides. . . .
Foaming with rage that mortals should surmount
The wat'ry deep, and sail the seas about.
Unheeding of their rage, the Oak sails on;
And Britons triumphing o'er seas are borne.'"

(*Editor's Note*, 1891.)

The flowers, etc., described, are (as given by the author on headings to the pages) the rose, tiger-lily, gentian, bluebell, yucca filimentosa, dahlia, snowberry, laurestinus, snowdrop, lilac, red primrose, hyacinth, crocus, periwinkle, heartsease, violet, jonquil, narcissus, daffodil, wallflower, crown imperial, yellow alysson, columbine, lily of the valley, flag, comerfrey, geranium, Greek valerian, honeysuckle, Turk's cap lily, Provence rose, Indian pink, guelder rose, sweetwilliam, trumpet flower, poppy, foxglove, white lily, peony, laurel, and oak.

The Second Book (so far as written) was printed in full in the ed. of 1891, and is here given. It will be noticed as characteristic of our author that he took the universe for his subject, and only completed vol. i.]

[2] ["Switzer, clearly short for Switzerland."—Author's note in *Præterita*, i. ch. iii. § 67.]

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1829

(AT THE AGE OF 10 YEARS)[1]

ON THE APPEARANCE OF A SUDDEN CLOUD OF YELLOW FOG COVERING EVERYTHING WITH DARKNESS[2]

It low'red upon the earth,—it lay
A champion in the face of day:
It darkened all the air around,
It let not free a single sound:
A leaf stirred not: the trees stood still;
The wind obeyed the darkness' will;
Not a thing moved; 'twas like the night.
The darkness faced the warrior, light;
They fought; the darkness conquered; still
Light obeyed not the conqueror's will,
But yet kept up a twilight day,
Though he below the darkness lay.
And now big drops of rain fell round,
And soon unloosed the chains of sound.
Again they fought; now[3] light arose,
And joined to fight with darkness' foes.
Darkness fought well, but could not stand;
He cried, "I want a helping hand."
He sunk; and then he cried, "I yield,
I yield this well-contested field."
And now the birds began to sing
Because now sound became a king;
And now the twilight went away,—
At length arose the wished-for day.
All now became as 'twas before,
And now I am not able to say more.[4]

[1] [This year was less productive than its predecessor. In addition to the pieces here given, Ruskin wrote (besides various fragments) poems entitled "Bosworth Field," and "A Shipwreck," and some metrical versions of several of the Psalms.]

[2] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 23–24. This piece was copied out in March 1829 into MS. Book iii.]

[3] [So in the MS.; printed "new" in the ed. of 1891.]

[4] [The last two lines were omitted in the ed. of 1891. The young author had certainly not yet learnt how not to let his pieces down at the end.]

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THE MOON[1]

Fair Luna, shining on thy cloudy car,
Riding in state, on spangled heaven afar,
Where, when the sun hath sunk upon the hill,
Thou dost dispense his light upon us still;—
Now, tipped with silver, messenger of night,
A dark, black cloud o'erhangs thy silver light,
Now half-obscured; but now thy light once more
Doth tip with silver every mountain hoar,
Shines on the vale, and on the ocean's breast
With glittering glory doth the waves invest.
And, as the waves roll on to gain the shore,
Their white foam, silvered, glitters more and more.
A tide of glory spreads along the waves;
Their moving breasts the flood of brightness laves.
But when, at last, the sun, from whom the light
Of the fair moon doth interrupt the night,
Rises once more upon that eastern gold,
The pale moon's story to the earth is told;
And with her glittering diamonds from the skies
That beauteous orb of night with her attendants flies.

June 28.

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 25. This and the next four poems are in MS. Book v.]

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ON HAPPINESS[1]

O WHAT is Happiness? that precious thing
Rare, and in great request; yet seldom found:
Sought for in various ways in which it seems
To be within the reach. Now try! Behold,
Active, it yet eludes the searcher's grasp
And leads him, hopeful, on; then disappoints him;
And now at last he tries the paths of vice.
Happiness is not there. In vain with drink
He tries to gain a transient gleam of joy,
But soon he sinks again; and plunged in grief
He feels the stings of conscience; and he ends
With launching out into eternity,
While his own hands do push the boat from shore.

July 19.

[1] [MS. Book v. First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 26. Written at Tunbridge; the fragment (says Mr. Collingwood) "catches cleverly the tones of Young:" see, for instance, "The Christian Triumph," in the *Night Thoughts*.]

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SABBATH MORNING[1]

See where the sun doth on that hill arise,
And look where Phœbus snatches up his reins:
See where his radiance paints the morning skies,
And where unwillingly the darkness wanes!

The dewdrops glitter to the rising sun,
With diamonds decking all the trees so fair;
Frail in their beauty, melting one by one,
And in a vapour thickening all the air.

Lo! where invited by the genial heat
Forth come the bees rejoicing in the sun;
From each fair flow'r they suck their honey sweet,
Forming a gentle murmur with their hum.

Above, in robe of blue adorned so fair,
Speckled with small white clouds is that soft[2] sky,
Which gently float upon the balmy air,
Hiding the skylark as it warbles high.

And now the birds awake and sweetly sing,
Hailing the sunny morn and azure sky,
Now from their nests upon the air they spring,
And brave the clouds as happily they fly.

Now, born[e] on waving air the church bell rings,
Pleasing the ear, as tolls it softly slow;
Sound following sound, full heavily it swings,
And in sweet cadence rolls, in music low.

[1] [MS. Book v. The first three stanzas are dated Aug. 2; the last three, Aug. 16, 1829. The poem was printed, with the omission of the third and fifth stanzas, in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 27.]

[2] [So in the MS.; "fair" in ed. of 1891, which also reads "the" for "his" in the first stanza, and "its" for "in" in the last.]

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SHAGRAM'S FAREWELL TO SHETLAND[1]

1

FAREWELL, my dear country, so savage and hoar!
I shall range on thy heath-covered Sumburg[h] no more;
For lo! I am snatched to a far distant shore,
To wish for my country in vain.

2

This green dancing sea that now bears me away,
I have seen it with pleasure on some stormy day
To dash 'gainst the cliffs, and throw up its white spray,
Roaring, as tossed the high surge.

3

Ah! little I thought that its bosom so fair
Me away from my country and wild heaths should bear;
For I hate the green fields and the warm southern air,
When compared with my dear native home.

4

They say it is savage, and covered with snow;
But still purple heather and grass are below;
And I care not, though o'er it the cold breezes blow,
For still it is fertile to me!

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 28–29. Shagram was a Shetland pony: the name is taken from Sir W. Scott's *Monastery*, ch. iii., and occurs in the paraphrase of the novel—the childish production of 1827, already mentioned (see above, p. 260 *n*), of which the following may be quoted :—

"There was a bog, and o'er this part,
Where even the light-footed hart
Go could not, for his feet in clay
Sank as he sped him on his way,
Not only Martin had to pass,
But e'en good Shagram with the lass. . . .
He to Shagram began to say,
'Come on, good horse, and let us see
Whether thou'lt obey thy master,—me!
Come on!' But Shagram would not go;
Though mute, he very well said 'No!' "]

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5

Wild roar the waves as they dash on the rocks;
And double and treble their thundering shocks;
And their foam still it rolls on like [1] thousand white flocks,
With their fleeces all white as the snow.

6

But I look for my country, and round me I gaze;
Yet nothing is seen, save the surge as it plays;
And those fair western clouds, still illumed by the rays
Of the sun, as it sinks 'neath the ocean.

7

My dear native land! I have parted from thee;
And thy high hill of Rona no more I can see:
From this time woe and sorrow are destined to me,
Though I'm borne unto Albion's shore.

October 18.

[1] [So in the MS. (v.) The ed. of 1891 reads "rolls like a," to suit the rhythm.]

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ETNA [1]

On old Sicilia's isle a mountain roars
In sounds re-echoed from Italian shores.
Lo! in the sable night, when mankind sleep,
And when each creature rests in slumber deep,
Oft there is heard a rumbling, rolling sound,
Which back Messina's rocky straits rebound.
Such is the thunder, that the mountains quake,
And the huge earth itself is felt to shake.
At the dread moment, houses, cities fall;
The earth gapes wide; destruction swallows all.

Then Etna from his burning crater pours
A fiery torrent o'er Sicilia's shores.
Down, down his side the lava rivers flow,
And the hot streams o'erwhelm all, all below!
While, from the crater, gaseous vapours rise;
Volcanic lightnings flash along the skies;
Earth gapes again: Catania's city falls,
And all her people die within her walls.

And now at length the Etnæan lavas stay,
And cease to roll along upon their way.
Etna is quiet; but it leaves a scene
That well may fill with fear the hearts of men.
O'er all Sicilia desolation reigns,
And by the lavas burnt are fruitful plains.
But on the buried cities others rise;
And soon again green verdure meets the eyes.

October 25.

[1] [MS. Book v. First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 30–31, which in line 2 misreads "Italia's." For these verses the author must have fallen upon some account of the eruptions of 1669 and 1693. He himself did not visit Sicily till 1874.]

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1830

(AT 11 YEARS OF AGE)[1]

TRAFALGAR[2]

Upon the Atlantic's spacious breast
The British ships come on;
Full many a soul shall go to rest,
Ere the fatal day is done.
The waves rose dancing at the prow,
In foaming, sparkling spray,
And each surge was tipped with a crest of snow
As the warships cut their way.
And on the waves which tossed around
The murderous lines of cannon frown'd.

[1] [In 1830 the author's poetical activity was great; to this period belongs his apology already cited (see above, Introduction, p. xxxii.). Mr. Collingwood says truly that "Trafalgar" and "Dash" are "much the most presentable pieces of this period." In the earlier part of the latter year the author's muse seems for the most part to have been in a morbid vein. There is a piece, dated March 1830, on "Death," and another, dated May 22, on "The Day of Judgment." The young poet sees "spectres wan and pale," and skies "of the hue of blood." He is also in a bloodthirsty vein. In "Revenge" an Indian savage makes Murder his "bloody bride." In "Despair" Lord Hubert, returning from the wars to find his wife unfaithful, vows that the Saracen shall feel his blade, and after many bloody encounters is himself in the 180th line laid low. The "Battle of Preston Pans" is the subject of a poem which gives plenty of scope for gore. Another long poem called "Love" describes the wasting away of a mother after the death of her babe. The mysteries of "Creation" are also dealt with. It is a relief from such high and tragic themes to find from some playful lines that our author was not above celebrating "My Fishing Rod." His powers seem to have been greatly stimulated in this year by a long summer tour (May to September). Of this tour he kept a full diary in prose, which exists in MS. They went by Oxford (May 18), Worcester, Stratford-on-Avon, Warwick, Leamington, Birmingham, Lichfield, Derby, Matlock, Haddon Hall, Chatsworth, Buxton, Manchester, Liverpool, Preston, Lancaster, to Kendal, and thence to Low-wood, Windermere (June 22). For their stay in the Lake Country, see below, p. 286. They left Kendal on July 12, and returned by Kirkby Lonsdale, Lancaster, Preston, Manchester, Castleton, Matlock, Uttoxeter, Stafford, Wolverhampton, Stourbridge, Bromsgrove, Tewkesbury, Gloucester, Cheltenham, to Herne Hill, which they reached early in September. On returning home, Ruskin began the study of Greek under Dr. Andrews—a study which is quickly reflected in the introduction of Greek words and allusions in the boy's note-books.]

[2] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 35–37. A fair copy of it (MS. Book iA), made for presentation to his father, is dated Feb. 8, 1830, the author's birthday. In MS. Book v., containing another fair copy, it is dated Feb. 12, 1830. In both the lines are continuous, and not broken into divisions as in the ed. of 1891.]

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Now, with a wild and hissing sweep,
A ball there dashes o'er the deep.
Then, flash on flash, and roar on roar,
The British ships began the war.
There, through the volumes of the smoke,
The lightning flash of cannon broke;
And the high-bounding, crested wave
Was tinged with the blood of the dying brave;
And darkness, rising drear and dread,
On the field of death her wings outspread.
Now the Spanish line gave way;
Now the British won the day.
But the Spanish parting volley gave
A naval hero to the grave.
Fearless on the stern he stood,
Looking on the purple flood.
One parting flash,—one bursting roar,—
Trafalgar's hero rose no more!
Then the British hearts beat high,
Then lightning flashed from every eye;
"Revenge!" burst wildly on the breeze,—
"Revenge!" it sounded o'er the seas.
With fellest[1] rage, with murderous roar
The British on the Spaniards bore.
Now, o'er the field of battle dread,
A sudden blaze there shone;
And every bloody billow bore
A brightness not its own:
As when the setting sun doth lave
Its glories in the ocean wave;
And when the gentle evening breeze
Curls the light ripple of the seas,
Which, glancing in the rays so bright,
Reflect a glittering line of light.
So, blazing high, sublime and dread
The flames rose flashing overhead.
When, sudden, to the skies arose
A far re-echoing sound
And broken masts, and splintered boards,
And flames were cast[2] around:
And sinking in the ocean deep
The brave together calmly sleep.
And now the Spanish foemen fled
Full swiftly o'er the Atlantic main;

[1] [In the later copy, "killing."]
[2] [In the later copy, "tossed."]

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And, while lamenting for their dead,
They sought the Spanish land again.
Meantime, the mourning victors bore
Their Nelson to his native shore;
And a whole weeping nation gave
Funereal honours to the brave.
Where was the eye that did not give
One single, bitter tear?
Where was the man that did not weep[1]
Upon Lord Nelson's bier?

February 8–12.

[1] [In the ed. of 1891 it is suggested that "weep" may be a clerical error for "grieve," and the editor adds that "there is no rough copy." But there are two fair copies, and both have "weep."]

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HADDON HALL[1]

I

Old halls, and old walls,—
  They are my great delight;
Rusty swords, and rotten boards,
  And ivy black as night!
Hey, ruination and hey, desolation,—
But created to spoil the creation!

II

Dry ditch, old niche,—
  Besides, an oaken table;
On't the warriors ate,
From a pewter plate,
  As much as they were able!
Hey, ruination and hey, desolation,—
Only created to spoil the creation!

III

O'er the mossy walk we next did stalk
  Gently for fear of tumbling;
For in that case
You'd make a face,
  Besides a noble grumbling.
Hey, ruination and hey, desolation,—
Only created to spoil the creation.[2]

[*About June or July.*]

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 39. Seen by Ruskin on Friday, June 11, 1830; for the itinerary of the tour, see above, p. 231. For his love of old castles, see *Præterita*, i. ch. i. § 6. The author in his prose Journal for 1830 mentions the old armour at Haddon, and "the dishes which were served up to table, of which the largest was about two feet long, and the smallest about a foot. These were soup-plates, which at a moderate computation were about eight inches deep. We then," he continues, "saw the great dining-hall. There were originally three large tables, but only one remains." The MS. of the verses is in Book v.]

[2] [Stanza iii. was omitted in ed. of 1891, which also read "Only" for "But" in the last line of the first stanza, and "will" for "did" in the first line of the last.]

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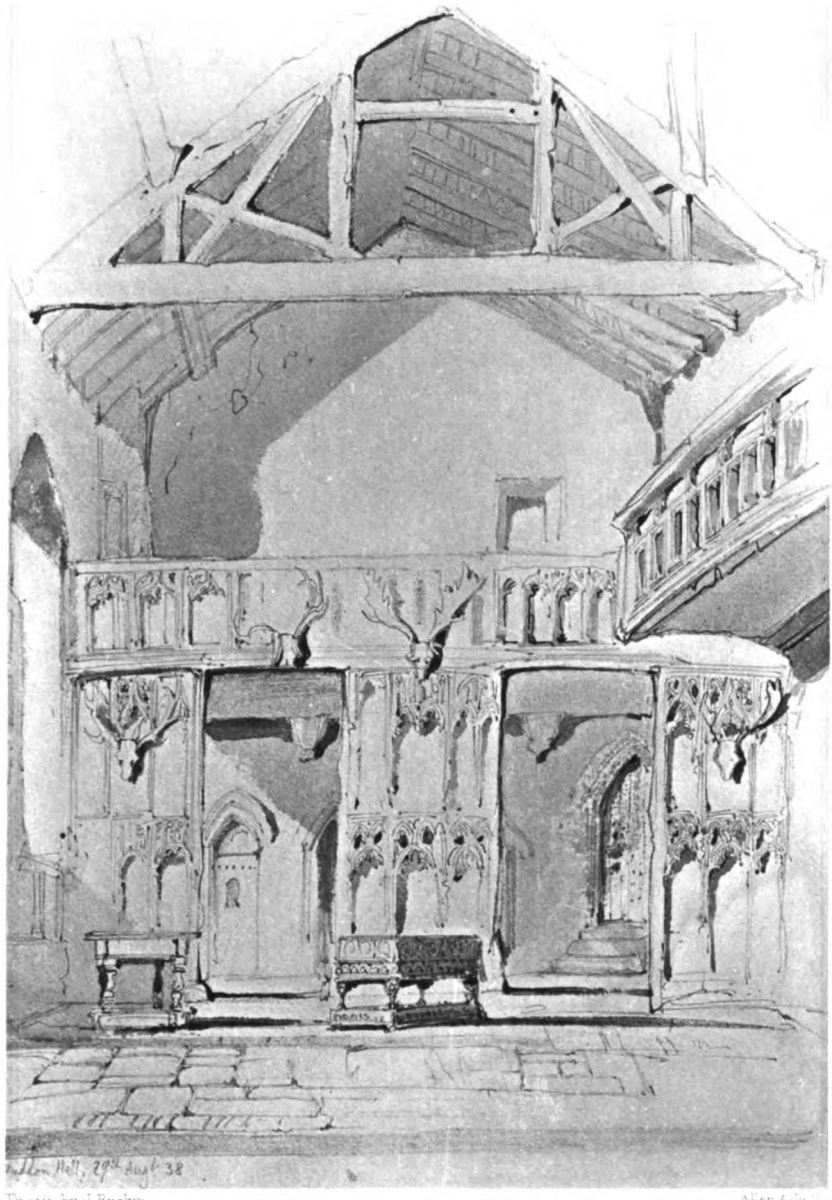

Drawn by J Ruskin

Allen & Co.

HADDON HALL

29th Aug. 1838.

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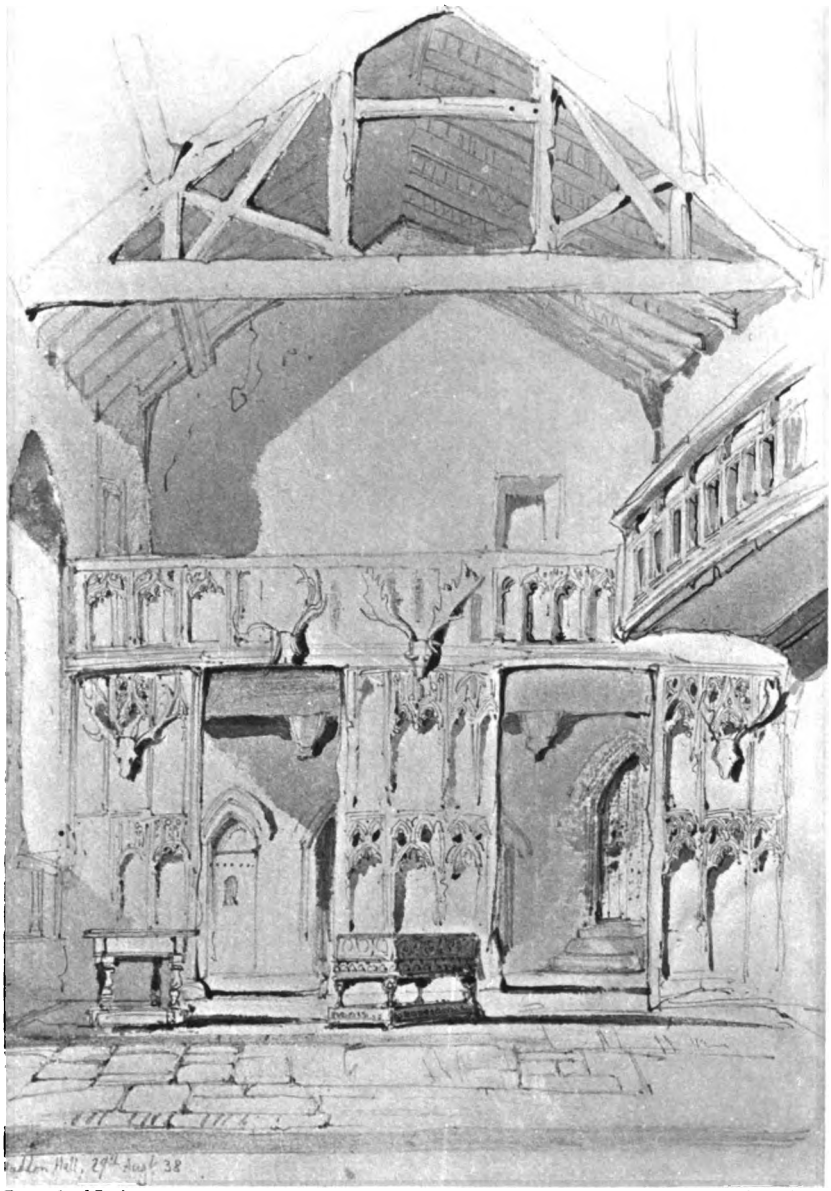

Drawn by J Ruskin

Allen & Co S

HADDON HALL

29th Augt 1838.

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ON THE DEATH OF MY COUSIN JESSIE[1]

Oh, ye restless deeps, that continually roll on thy[2] everlasting waves, swell the moaning of thy waves, and the harmony of your billows, to a dirge for her who is departed!

For, colder than the foam, which, not so pure as her spirit, is rising on the crest of thy billows, she reposes in the grave.

O ye winds of heaven, breathe in melancholy notes a song of death!

Youth is departed; beauty is withered in the grave.

She, whose step was lighter than the roe's, and whose eye was brighter than the eagle's,—her dust is consigned to the dust: she is gone to a home from which she shall not return; to a rest which is eternal, to a peace which is unbroken.

She is freed from her sufferings; she is released from her pains.

Why should I mourn for her who is departed? She is not consigned to the dust,—she is not given to the grave!

She is not a prey to the worms, and her beauty is not departed!

Her soul is ethereal; her spirit is with its God. She is fairer and purer than on earth.

Why should I mourn for the spirit which is returned to its Maker?

I will not mourn; I will rejoice for her who is praising her Creator,—who is joining in the harmony of heaven.

9 *September.*

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 40–41. His cousin, Jessie Richardson, of Perth, had died nearly three years earlier, in the winter of 1827. For his childish affection for her, and for her death, see *Præterita*, i. ch. iii. §§ 70, 71; ch. iv. § 77. The poem is Ossianic in form, as "being intended for the 'coronach' of a *Highland* girl."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. This piece is from MS. Book v.]

[2] [Here and in following lines the ed. of 1891 read "your."]

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1830-31

(AT 11–12 YEARS OF AGE)

ITERIAD;

OR, THREE WEEKS AMONG THE LAKES[1]

[1] [The "Iteriad" was begun on November 28, 1830, and finished January 11, 1832; the dates are given on a fair copy of the whole (MS. Book vii.). It was one of the few enterprises of the kind that Ruskin finished according to the design. "'Iteriad' is at last finished," he wrote to his father on Jan. 14, 1832; "quite copied in, fairly dismissed. I was cutting capers all the remainder of the evening after I had done the notable deed." There is in another MS. Book (vi.) a draft of most of Books I., II., and IV., and there are pieces (i. 401–428, and iv. 297–330) in other MS. Books also (v. and viii.). Of the passages here given, those of Books I., II., and IV. are printed from the fair copy in MS. vii.; while those from Book III. ("The Ascent of Skiddaw") are printed from the fair copy in MS. v., which was that mainly followed by the edition of 1891. The fair copy in MS. vii. is, however, without doubt the later, but the variations are slight, and it has seemed better in this instance to follow the text previously printed. A comparison of this with the earlier draft shows, as might be gathered from the verses, that they were written *currente calamo*. Variations are few, but occasionally the author tried several different words before making his final choice.

The poem is an account of the tour in the Lake District made by Ruskin with his parents and cousin, Mary Richardson, in the summer of 1830. They reached Low-wood, Windermere, from Kendal, on Tuesday, June 22; on Wednesday, June 23, drove to Keswick, where they put up at the Royal Oak (p. 292); visited Friar's Crag and Castlehead on June 24 (p. 293); on Sunday, saw Southey at Crosthwaite Church (p. 297); on Monday, June 28, excursion to Buttermere (p. 298); on Wednesday, June 30, ascended Skiddaw (Book III.); on Thursday, drove to Patterdale (p. 308); on Friday, returned to Low-wood (p. 311); on Sunday, July 4, saw Wordsworth at Rydal Chapel; on Tuesday, made an excursion to Coniston (p. 312). They left Low-wood on July 12 for Kendal.

Book III., describing the ascent of Skiddaw, was the first to be written; it is in MS. Book v., and belonging chronologically to the poems of 1830, was so included in the ed. of 1891. It is here thought better not to separate it from the context—intended from the first, and ultimately given, by the author. "The Ascent of Skiddaw" was in the *Poems*, 1891, at i. 42–48; and "Passages from the Iteriad," i. 51–78.

The whole poem consists of 2212 lines. Of these 969 are here given. It cannot be said that the intrinsic merit of the piece is such as to justify its publication at length. It is remarkable, however, as showing the author's fluency, facility, and accuracy of observation, and as containing a lively description of scenes and modes of travel, now passed away. Considerable curtailment is possible without impairing the interest of the poem from these points of view. The edition of 1891 omitted 1386 lines. Several of the shorter omissions are here restored, in accordance with the general rule adopted in this edition of letting pieces stand as the author wrote them; but it has not been thought worth while to print the longer omissions, which are in the nature of sections complete in themselves. Particulars of the restorations and omissions are given in subsequent notes.]

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BOOK I[1]

As, eagerly waiting the dawn of the day
And sleeplessly counting the moments, I lay,
I thought of the joys that my bosom should know,—
Of the rich tides of pleasure unmingled which flow;—
Unmingled with grief, and unmingled with gall,
But draughts of delight,—rapture,—banquetings all!
Impatient I watched as the lingering light
Too slowly o'erpowered the clouds of the night;
Who, clothed in her star-sprinkled heaven-shrouding vest,
Which gracefully mantled her e'er peaceful breast,—
And while on her brows, her dark tresses among,
Which flowed soft, the pale crescent benignantly shone—
From the earth-cheering rays of Aurora she fled,
In stern winter's palaces hiding her head.
At length the time came, when, the bill being made,—
Boots, hostler and chambermaid all duly paid,—
Sticks, bonnets, hats, great-coats, all duly prepared;—
Our elegant carriage rolled out of the yard!
Oh, the rapturous vision! But cease this vain rhyme
Which, not at all needed, wastes paper and time,—
Too lengthened and tiresome. Sufficient to say
That we entered our carriage, and rattled away.
The road it was hilly; and long, long it seemed,
As one hill being past still one more intervened,
As opposing themselves to our still hoping eyes
The ne'er-ending summits successively rise,
Till raising our hands in admiring amaze
We silently enthusiastical gaze.

Oh, thrice happy moment, for Windermere's sheet
In its bright, silvan beauty lay stretched at our feet!

[1] [In the author's fair copy, "Book I." is followed by :—

THE ARGUMENT

Journey from Kendal to Low-wood—View from that Place—Walk to the Waterfall at Ambleside—Sunset—Sleep—Morning Sail on Winandermere—Grasmere, Helvellyn, and Thirlmere—Druidical Temple on the Summit of Castlerig—Saddleback—Arrival in Keswick.

As some of these subjects are here omitted, the cross-heads inserted by the editor in 1891 are retained in the text in place of those used in the author's "Argument." Book I., as written, contains 518 lines. The ed. of 1891 gave 172. The following lines omitted from that edition are here restored: 7–14, 23–28, 31–38, 327–30, 334–5, 343–4, 353–4. In line 29, the ed. of 1891 read "when" for "for"; in line 341, "in the breeze" for "to"; in line 401, "the" for "my."]

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Ere we reached our home, the dark shades of the night,
Descending, had hidden the hills from our sight;
They died in the mists of the darkness away,
To be waked into light at the dawn of the day.

. . . . . .[1]

[GRASMERE]

And now towards the green banks of Grasmere we prest,
Where it stretched 'mid the valley its hill-shaded breast.
And now,—as ere evening concluded the day
Our journey o'er many a wild mountain lay,—
At the inn which is built on the banks of the lake[2]
We determined our luncheon or dinner to take.
But, in order that we to the inn might attain,
We were forced to turn down by a long, narrow lane.
But it twisted and turned so, to left and to right,
With its hedges obscuring the inn from our sight,
That we, all its troublesome windings not knowing,
Were all the time wondering where we were going!
And fears which were quite of a different kind
Were intruding and pushing themselves on our mind.
Suppose, in our way that a carriage should come,—
The road was so narrow!—what then should be done?
Then 'twas certain and sure that one of us must back.
Back?—back!—why we *might* have backed into the lake!
What should we say then to Miss Fortune so fickle?
Then truly she'd have put us into a pickle!
But these accidents only existed in thought,
For safely and soon to the inn we were brought.

And now an excursion we thought we would make,
A view of the lake and the valley to take;
So, enquiring the way to a small elevation,
Whose summit we thought a most excellent station,[3]
We set off by a path 'mid the valley which wound,
And now some small eminence carried around,
Till after some puzzling we came to the rock
And swiftly climbed up to the trees on its top.

[1] [Lines 189–300, describing the "morning sail on Winandermere," breakfast, and the drive from Low-wood through Rydal, omitted.]

[2] [Not, of course, the comparatively modern "Prince of Wales" hotel. The old inns at Grasmere were "The Swan" (where Scott stayed) and "The Red Lion" (near the church), which latter might perhaps, in comparison to "The Swan," be described as on the lake.]

[3] [Butterlip How.]

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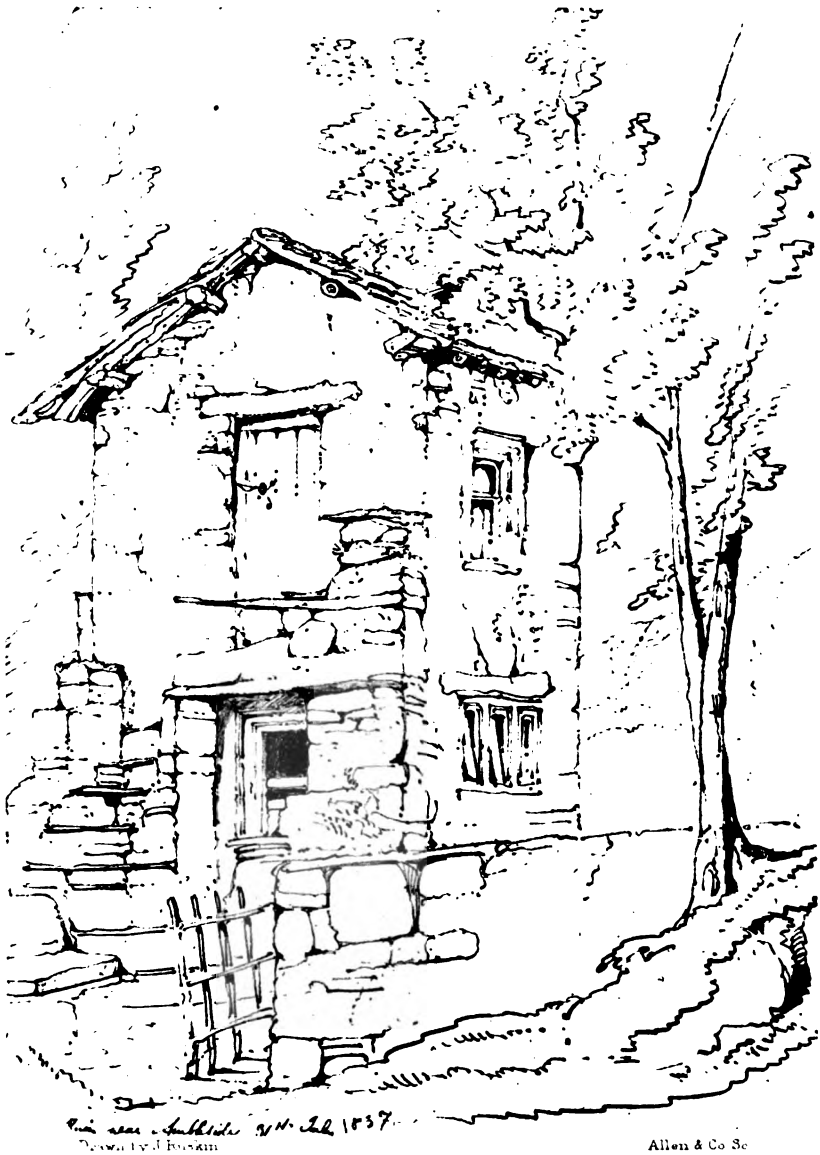

Ruin near AMBLESIDE.
31st July. 1837.

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First, we gazed where Helm-crag to the west of the vale
Reared its cloud-splitting head, and lower'd down on the dale,
While its dark shadow shaded the fields at its feet,
Made the cornfields wave browner and darkened the deep;
But the terrified eye, now deserting its form—
The abode of the tempest, the pris'n of the storm—
To the fields of the valley beneath it would rove,
Which seemed sacred to peace, and to heaven-born love;
Where the husbandman's labour repaid him tenfold,
All rich in their wavings and growing in gold;
And their grain-loaded heads as they bent to the breeze
Seemed soft, rolling waters and billowy seas.
And the cattle repose on the meadows so green,
And the lambs with their mothers disporting are seen;
And the cattle, they mingle their soft-sounding lowing
With the sound of the streams through the fields that are flowing;
Till the valley was checked by the opposite hills
All dotted with sheep and all sparkling with rills:
While far to the south, the lake spreads its fair waves,
And the meadows which stoop to its edges it laves.

And now, when the prospect we all had surveyed,
A descent we remembered at last must be made.
And although we had lingered and stayed to the last,
We addressed ourselves to the troublesome task;
But wherever our steps we were carefully bending
Oh! still that moss-path was as steep in descending,—
So, half rolling, half going,—half tumbling, half walking,—
Half laughing, half giggling,—half tittering, half talking;—
Now surveying a streamlet, now mineralizing,—
Now admiring the mountains, and now botanizing,—
We came to the inn; and set off when we'd dined,
And ascending a hill, we left Grasmere behind.

. . . . . .[1]

[HELVELLYN]

First, the giant Helvellyn arose on my right,—
Helvellyn, Helvellyn,—that mountain of might!
Peaked rocks, over dark, gloomy gorges impending,—
And a torrent down every ravine was descending.
Cloud-born, o'er the precipice stern they did break,
And, tumultuously foaming, were lost in the lake;

[1] [Lines 363–400, describing the first part of the drive from Grasmere, omitted.]

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Appearing, as brightly they dashed from on high,
Like threads of pure silver which hung from the sky.
Midway on the face of the cliff the clouds rode;
High above rose the mountain, the eagle's abode.

. . . . . .[1]

[THIRLMERE]

So distinctly reflected the margin so green,
The wave seemed unbounded—its border, unseen:
And, half-overhanging the silent, blue tide,
The opposite hills stretched their heath-covered side.[2]
How bright,—how luxuriant, looked the thick heath,
Its rich purple bells as 'twas bending beneath,
Its patches rich shaded with fern as it grew,
And mantled the hill with its Tyrian hue.
While, beyond, a dark chaos of mountains was tost,
And hills after hills in the distance were lost:
While the sun, ere he dies on the mountains away,
Was shedding his brightest,—but transient—ray.
Now reaching our carriage, with lingering look,
Of Helvellyn and Thirlmere our farewell we took;
By rock and by brooklet swift galloping on,
And holding our course by the Vale of St. John,
As the sun was just setting, and late was the time,
We hastened tall Castlerig's windings to climb.

. . . . . .[3]

[KESWICK]

And now we arrived at the brow of the hill,
Where the vast vale of Keswick lay sweetly and still.[4]
To the right, on the north of the valley, we saw
The majestical form of the lofty Skiddaw.

. . . . . .[5]

[1] [Lines 411–446, a digression extolling Helvellyn above Parnassus, omitted.]

[2] [The "heathy swells" of the Armboth Fells; see Matthew Arnold's "Resignation."]

[3] [Lines 465–480, describing the great so-called Druids' Circle on Castlerigg, omitted.]

[4] [This was the view which greatly struck the poet Gray, on his visit in 1769. It was, he wrote, so enchanting, that he "had almost a mind to have gone back again" to Keswick. The ed. of 1891 reads "dale" for "vale."]

[5] [Lines 485–506, on Saddleback, and a digression thereon, omitted.]

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In a proud amphitheatre,—mountainous,—dread,
Below us fair Derwent in glory was spread.
On rocky isles covered with verdure, and bays,
On capes jutting out, and on forests we gaze,
Which relieved the dark mountains in distance and gloom,
And chasms as deep and as drear as the tomb.
Now on rugged Grasmoor the red sun dies away,
And evening comes down with her mantle of grey.
. . . . . .[1]

BOOK II[2]

[FRIAR'S CRAG AND CASTLEHEAD]

When breakfast was done on the following day,
As impatient we were Derwent lake to survey,
We determined a walk to its banks we would take,
And therefore enquired the way to the lake.
Though the Sun, in his noon and meridian glory,
Was seeming to tell us a different story;
And that, if we attempted to walk to the lake,
Our faces he'd broil and our hands he would bake.
. . . . . .[3]
Now on by a path through the meadows we stray,
All rich with the fragrance of newly mown hay;
Each outracing the other, with much emulation
To arrive at the top of some small elevation;
Till the sheet where the dark water still onward flows
Lay not at our feet but in front of our nose.

[1] [Lines 515–519 omitted, describing their putting up at the "Royal Oak," Keswick.]

[2] ["The Argument" at the head of Book II. is as follows:—

Excursions about Keswick and Expedition to Buttermere—Walk to the Lake—Washing Clothes—Missing our Way—Ascending a Hill—Sitting on the Top—Returning—Crosthwaite's Museum—Church, Mr. Southey—Setting off for Borrowdale—Straits of Borrowdale—The Dale itself—Bowder Stone—Ascending the Mountains—Honistar Crag—Buttermere—Thunderstorm—Return to Keswick.

Book II., as written, contains 694 lines. The ed. of 1891 gave 294. The following lines, omitted in that edition, are here given: 279–80, 305–6, 309–10, 325–34, 337–40, 377–80, 393–4, 583–4, 599–602, 605–6. The ed. of 1891 reads in line 77, "at any rate ought to be"; and in line 357, "mid tumble" for "in."]

[3] [Lines 9–20, a digression on the heat, omitted.]

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A shout burst from all, while each of us strove
He had first seen the blue billow rolling to prove,—
"I first saw the lake!"—"No, no, no! it was I!"
Till mamma checked us all with a mum-making "fie!"
We stood on the beach where some small piers of stone
Forth into the water some distance were thrown;
While a fleet of small boats there at anchorage hung,
And dividing the ripples they carelessly swung.

But there on the beach,—and with shame be it said!—
Some women were washing,—oh, women indeed!—
Disfiguring the Derwent, their linen were washing,
And tubbing, and wetting, and splashing, and dashing.
They hung them all out on the boughs to be dried,
And clothed with a margin of linen the tide!
Oh, Jupiter! dost thou in calmness yet see?
Are the shores of the Derwent as nothing to thee?—
Do these women not yet feel thy well-deserved rage?
Oh, Jupiter, thou must be blinded with age!
Blind? yes, quite stark blind from the length of thy life,
Or opposing the scolds of thy crabbed old wife.
It is a complete, a most excellent sign
That the all-seeing eye it no longer is thine.
But give, Jove, oh, give thy great, God-shaking frown,
And let on these women thine anger come down!
And now, having passed through a sun-shading wood,
On a point of rough rocks o'er the waters we stood.
The roots of the fir, of the elm, and the oak,
Through the rock-covering soil they a passage had broke;
And oh! they presented such nets for the toes,
We were always in danger of breaking our nose.
Below us, upon the dark wave-beaten rock,
The white, angry billows their foaming crests broke,
As soothing the ear with a ne'er-ceasing dashing,
And moistening the moss and the weeds with their plashing.[1]

[1] [The author had already received strong impressions of Friar's Crag (in 1826?): "The first thing which I remember as an event in life, was being taken by my nurse to the brow of Friar's Crag on Derwent Water; the intense joy, mingled with awe, that I had in looking through the hollows in the mossy roots, over the crag, into the dark lake, has associated itself more or less with all twining roots of trees ever since" (*Modern Painters*, vol. iii. ch. xvii. § 13. Cf. *Præterita*, i. ch. v. § 107). A memorial to Ruskin now stands on the spot. It consists of a simple monolithic block of Borrowdale stone, rough and unhewn as it came from the quarry. It is of the type of the standing stones of Galloway. Upon one side is incised (from the design of Mr. W. G. Collingwood) a simple Chi-Rho, enclosed in a circle, after the fashion of the earliest crosses, with the following inscription beneath, from *Deucalion*, xii. § 40: "The Spirit of God is around you in the air you breathe—His glory in the light that you see, and in the fruitfulness of the earth and the joy of His creatures, He has written for you day by day His revelation, as He has granted you day by day your daily bread." On the

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And now some small height we did wish to attain,
A view of the lake and the valley to gain:
And so, in returning, turned off by a way
Which we thought tow'rd a tree-covered eminence lay.
It entered a wood; we still kept going on,
Completely shut out from the light of the sun.
No part of the scene the confused eye sees,
Save copses on copses, and trees upon trees:
Till, the path in the forest bewild'ringly tost,
All points of the compass completely were lost:[1]
North, east, west, or south, from each other not knowing,
With all kinds of conjectures how, where we were going,
Although it afforded a great deal of fun.
"We shall soon find a path through the meadows," says one.—
"Lawkadaisy, that bough nearly knocked off my hat!"—
One of us says this, and another says that:
"We are nearing the lake, or at an'rate we ought to be!"
"Well, I declare that a most excellent thought to be!"
Thus wond'ring, we, serpent-like, twisted about,
Till just where we got in 'twas just there we got out.
And we this occurrence determined quite by
Not any more by-paths uncertain to try.
We left the fair lake where so azure it flowed,
And hotly set off by the Borrowdale road;
And laughing, and chafing,[2] and gazing, and toiling,
Perspiring, and frying, and roasting, and broiling,
Glad, gladly the sheltering wood we surveyed,
Which promised to cool and to soothe with its shade.
The track it was steep, thorny, rugged and rocky,
As it angled and turned round the oak trees so knotty.
Some, decaying, were but a vast, grey, hollow shell;
Of former young grandeur and might they did tell:
And the soil which hung thick round their huge roots far-spreading
Formed steps, trunk-supported, where'er we were treading.
We pulled up the hill, and we turned round about,
And we crossed and we recrossed within and without;

other side of the monolith, facing the lake, is a medallion in bronze, the work of Signor Lucchesi, representing Ruskin as he was in the "seventies." A crown of wild olive is seen in the background, and among the olive leaves Ruskin's motto—"To-day"—is introduced. Above the portrait is the name "John Ruskin"; beneath, the dates 1819 to 1900. Beneath these again is incised the inscription: "The first thing . . . Derwent Water" (as above). The memorial was unveiled on October 6, 1900 (*Times*, October 8). An account of the monument, with a report of the speeches delivered on the occasion and a photograph of one side of the monolith, is contained in ch. ix. of H. D. Rawnsley's *Ruskin and the English Lakes*. Canon Rawnsley says that Ruskin in conversation once described the view from Friar's Crag as "one of the three most beautiful scenes in Europe" (*l.c.* p. 216).]

[1] [Cockshott.]

[2] [The ed. of 1891 reads "chaffing."]

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To all parts of the wood we full pryingly rambled,
Over stone, over rock, we impatiently scrambled.
"Oh, we shall not get up to the summit this hour!"—
"Oh, mamma, I have got such a beautiful flow'r;
Here's a violet! Look, mamma! pray, papa, do!
What is this of rich crimson? this delicate blue?
This moss of a bright living green do behold!
And here is a cowslip, the goblet of gold!
Look under the moss, there; it cannot be sage!
What can that queer thing be?"—"'tis a saxifrage."
"And here's Ladies Slipper, and here's Ladies-smock
And this,"—"Oh, don't touch it, it's poison,—Hemlock!"
And many more flowers 'mid the forest which grew,
Whose names I've forgot,—or perhaps never knew!
Now the rocks gave us rather more trouble to climb,
And rather more labour, and took us more time,
For the slippery moss always set us a-sliding,
Insomuch that we could not at all it confide in:
Except where, in velvety cushions, it grows,
And kindly invited our rock-fatigued toes.
"These troublesome stones,—I am always a-stumbling!"
"Hollo, what's that there? I was nearly a-tumbling!"
"What, do you not think we the summit are near?"
"Oh, give me your hand,—do pray help me up here!"
Till, emerging from under a thick, stunted tree,
An old rotten seat on the summit we see.
The people before to this summit who came
Had carved, or had hacked, on its surface their name,
And had covered the seat with no spaces between each,
Oh, mighty conceit,—so like cockneys at Greenwich!
But 'twas so decrepid, so old and decayed,—
To trust to its legs we were somewhat afraid;
Lest, tumbling as if we had sat upon wheels,
It had landed our heads in the place of our heels.
So some on a rock that was cushioned with moss,
And some on the June-tinted, brown turf repose;
Stretched out upon earth's verdant bosom we rest,
But tear her young flowers from her nourishing breast,
Which forth to our hands she luxuriantly poured:—
Thou sayest that it was but a cruel reward!

. . . . . .[1]

[1] [Lines 137–276, describing a visit to "Mr. Crosthwaite's Museum," omitted. The prose diary explains that the Museum belonged to Mr. Crosthwaite, son of the original founder (Captain Crosthwaite). The Museum, now dispersed, was for many years in the building which is now the Town Hall in the Market Square of Keswick.]

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[HERO-WORSHIP]

Now hurried we home, and while taking our tea
We thought—Mr. Southey at church we might see![1]
And then unto sleep we our bodies resigned,
And sunk in oblivion and silence our mind.
Next morning, the church how we wished for the[2] reaching!
I'm afraid 'twas as much for the poet as preaching!
And, oh what a shame! were shown into a seat
With everything, save what was wanted, replete;
And so dirty, and greasy, though many times dusted,
The ladies all thought it could never be trusted;
First looking at seat, and again upon flounce,
And dusting, and gazing, for fear of their gowns!
I think all the time they took such mighty care
They sat upon thorns, and perhaps upon air!
Howe'er *I* forgave,—'deed, I scarcely did know it,—
For really we were "cheek-by-jowl" with the poet!
His hair was no colour at all by the way,
But half of't was black, slightly scattered with grey;
His eyes were as black as a coal, but in turning
They flashed,—ay, as much as that coal does in burning!
His nose in the midst took a small outward bend,
Rather hooked like an eagle's, and sharp at the end;
But his dark lightning-eye made him seem half-inspired,
Or like his own Thalaba, vengefully fired.
We looked, and we gazed, and we stared in his face;
Marched out at a slow, stopping, lingering pace;
And as towards Keswick delighted we walked,
Of his face, and his form, and his features we talked,
With various chatter beguiling the day
Till the sun disappeared and light fled away.

[1] ["Mary Richardson writes in the Journal: 'On Sunday we went to Crosthwaite Church, which is about a mile from the town of Keswick. We were put into a seat that would have been a disgrace to any church, it was so dirty.' At this point her cousin John takes up the story, and continues: 'But we easily put up with that, as in the seat directly opposite Mr. Southey sat. We saw him very nicely. He seemed extremely attentive; and by what we saw of him, we should think him very pious. He has a very keen eye, and looks extremely like—a poet.' On the next Sunday, they saw Wordsworth at Rydal Chapel, and 'were rather disappointed in this gentleman's appearance.'"—*Editor's Note*, 1891. "He appeared asleep," they record, "the greatest part of the time. This gentleman," they add, "possesses a long face and a large nose."]

[2] [The ed. of 1891 reads "to be."]

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[BORROWDALE IN A SHOWER]

THE morning appeared with a great face of doubt,
Or to make us keep in, or to let us go out;
And at the first opening of joy-bringing dawn
Dark cloaks of thick cloud round the mountain were drawn.
We look out of window,—call guides after guides,—
Demand whether rain or fair weather betides.
The first puts his thumb on one side of his nose,
And looks up to the smoke, to see how the wind blows;
Then pronounces it after a great deal of puffing,
"A vara bad dai! Why, you couldn't see nothing!"
The next,—"Whai, ye sees, sir, I'se can't hardly say;
Boot I'se think that it may be a middlin' fine day."
Another,—"For Skudda this never will do,
But I think's it prove fine, though not fit for a view:
And so if you liked it, a trip you might take
By Borrowdale, down into Bootthermere lake."
Delighted, we heard the most capital thought,
And at the glad prospect we eagerly caught.
But the ladies a little were daunted in courage,
When they heard that six miles could be passed by no carriage,
And that 'twould require e'en a great deal of care
To ride upon sure-footed ponies up there.
But the more that we heard of its steepness and trouble,
Our impatience to vanquish it still became double,
Till an open vehicle we ask and a guide
And following steeds for the ladies beside;
Which when ready all and prepared we were told,
Away from the Inn we most joyfully rolled.
By the road to dark Borrowdale onward we ride,
By the wave-beaten beach of the Derwent's blue tide.
How fresh looked the waters! a breeze on them swept
And roused into anger their passionless depth,
Till the ripples which rose in its following train
Sunk into their own native silence again.
But now we were roused by a few rainy taps[1]
On the ribbon-bowed bonnets, and crowns of the hats:
Thus adding a fresh prospect unto the view,—
The beautiful prospect of being wet through!
So, covering our knees o'er with cloaks and shawls plenteous,
We erected a kind of a parasol pent-house.
Then, after a great deal of rain preparation,
We awaited the shower, with a sad expectation.

[1] [So in both MSS.; corrected in the ed. of 1891 to "pats"; but see Book iv. lines 493–4 for a similar mis-rhyme.]

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It came with a kind of—"I do not know *what* to do!
What I should, what I could, what I would, what I ought to do!"
We were wondering much what 'twas going to be at,
And now it was this, and again it was that;
And the rain it was changeable as was the wind,
Till to shine on our journey it made up its mind.
But the sun when at last to peep out he would deign,
Looked as if he'd been troubled as much by the rain,
And, vexed at the clouds so incessantly storming,
Looked as if he'd been crying the whole of the morning!
Now in front rose the cliff where, in tumble and roar,
The quaking crags quiver 'neath angry Lowdore.
But as long was the way, and as we were in haste,
Its waters,—those waters of thunder, we past.
And then we looked back upon Keswick's sweet vale,
Ere we entered the gorges of dark Borrowdale.
Beyond the bright space where the Derwent lake flows,
More majestic in distance huge Skiddaw arose;
And, softened, the valley was smilingly seen,
The lake's azure waters and Islands between.
A range of huge mountains rose sheer from its verge,
And into the lake their steep pointlets they urge;[1]
Where many a gulf, tree-surrounded, was made,
Where the wave placid rested, completely embayed:
While steep to the left the white Shepherd's crag stood,
And its loose slaty sides, thinly scattered with wood.

But now in our front our low road seemed to check
In a chaos of hills, a dark mountainous wreck.
All traces of verdure and forest were lost,
In that dark group of hills all so gloomily tost,
Where cliff after cliff and dark rock over rock
Reluctantly seemed at the heavens to stop.
Hanging o'er the dread dell their huge summits they hurled,
At whose feet the fair Derwent so crystalline purled.
Astonished we passed through that wilderness lone,
Till burst on our eyesight dark Bowder's huge stone.
A dark rock its high summit right forward did force,
And altered the fierce torrent's rock-beating course.
High raised on its brink, frowning down on the flood,
A vast mass of mossy rock dreadfully stood:
It seemed from the hill high above as if torn,
And down to its wonderful resting-place borne.

[1] [This is one of several lines of which the author tried several versions. "Green" and "high" and "steep,"—and "capes" "capelets" and "pointlets"—are given as alternatives in the first MS.]

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But nature most queerly contrived has to hitch it,
And poised on a narrow edge managed to pitch it;
And yet though so balanced, so firm is the rock,
You may mount by a ladder quite up to the top,
As when some vast ship the blue ocean divides,
Her keen arching bow stems the breast of the tides;
The wondering waves 'gainst her stern dash their spray;
The waters enraged yet are forced to obey;
And back from her sides the huge billows are thrown:—
So sternly triumphing appeared Bowder Stone.

. . . . . .[1]

[HONISTAR CRAG]

And now on the peak of the mountain we stood,—
Looked back upon field, upon forest, and flood,
Where sun-topped Helvellyn his summits upthrew,
Distinctly outlined on the firmament blue;
And the few retired fields, which in Borrowdale lay,
So richly reposed in th' enlivening ray.
But no longer we now on the mountain remain,
But hasten broad Buttermere's banks to attain:
Our way down the gorge of the valley we bend,
And slowly the rough mountain-path we descend.
Vast Honistar Crag, overhanging the road,
Pushed right 'cross our path his high forehead so broad,
Opposing our progress. We turned round his brow,—
Encircled his cliff by the streamlet below;
And gazed on the giant, as round him we wheeled,
As his wonderful shape was distinctly revealed.
He's none of your beauties,—no elegant wood
With romantical glades on his summit upstood;
No softening the scene, or enlivening the view,
No fading in distance the mountains so blue:
No cockneys could find in its dread rock so antique
The fair picturesque or the rural romantic;
No silly school-bred miss just turned seventeen
Can affectedly say of 't—"How charming a scene!!!"
But above any misses, O my admiration!—
Dark Honistar Crag rears his stern elevation.

. . . . . .[2]

[1] [Lines 401–452, describing some more of the expedition, omitted.]
[2] [Lines 479–578, describing more of the drive and also a halt for dinner, omitted.]

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[THUNDERSTORM AT BUTTERMERE][1]

But now on the mountains the dark clouds assembled,
And the waves of the lake they more gloomily trembled;
And then came a calm on its billowless breast,
As deep expectation were stilling its rest.
The clouds flew not swift, but in low'ring and gloom
Lay mighty and dark on the heat of the noon,
The air was oppressive, and sultry, and still,
And no cooling breezes swept over the hill.
When lo! from a cloud o'er dark Honistar's head
There gleamed through the darkness a thunderbolt red.
The lake for a moment reflected the flash,
Then dreadfully heard in the distance a crash,
As if mountains on mountains that moment were hurled,
Or dashed into atoms and ruins a world,
Or rocks to their heart by the lightning were riven,—
So the thunder it rolled o'er the face of the heaven.
Re-echoed[2] from mountains, rebounding from hills,
Again the dread sound the vast æther it fills:
O'er gloomy Helvellyn sublimely it swells,
Then wakes the rude echoes of Langdale's peaked fells;
Then Kirkstone's vast echoes replied to the sound,
And hurled it the circle of mountains around;
Red Pike tossed the thunder in distance and scorn,
Till the dells of the Derwent receiving the storm,
The thunder it spoke from the crags of Lowdore,
And Skiddaw's twin summits awoke to the roar.
Again growled the lion on Saddleback's dells
And the last thunder died on the distant Shap fells.
Then, fitful, the breeze from its mountainous hold
Forced all the stern thunders to peace as it rolled.
The winds in their anger rushed down on the deep,
Through every ravine, with a passionate sweep;
Then woke the dark waters, and plumage of foam
On the lake's swelling bosom was dazzlingly thrown,
Reflecting the lightning; and rattle-ing peals
Again roused the mimicking sport of the hills.
Those chasm-hidden lions again from their caves
Sent back the dread sounds o'er the wondering waves;
And the echoes from Black-combe, o'erhanging the main,
To Scawfell in mockery growled them again.

[1] ["There is no mention in the Journal of the thunderstorm, but only of the wet."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[2] [The ed. of 1891 reads "Re-echoing."]

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And numberless flashes and numberless roars
Hurled all their lone terrors on deep Crummock's shores;
Till the clouds, o'er the lake which so threateningly hung,
Flew away, the huge fells of the Derwent among.

Then first, the bright orb of the heavens appearing,
Again with his presence the hills he was cheering;
Though a shower, yet distilling its dews on the ground,
Its glistering drops was outpouring around.
Till, high o'er the heads of the mountains below,
There spanned the wide heavens the wonderful bow;
All glowing in purple, and crimson, and gold,
It grasped in its circle the waters, which rolled,—
Returning the colours so gloriously given,—
Returning again to the face of the heaven.
. . . . . .[1]

BOOK III

ASCENT OF SKIDDAW[2]

[THE START]

The hills were obscured in a curtain of cloud;
Every stern, savage fell had its vapoury shroud.
Not yet the dark veil of the East was withdrawn,
And cheerless and drear the approach of the morn.
As we looked on the clouds with great feelings of sorrow,
How sadly we thought, "We must wait till to-morrow!"
Sometimes we did mope, as the clouds passed us by;
And again we did hope, as appeared the blue sky.

[1] [Lines 633–694, describing the return to Keswick, omitted.]

[2] [Ruskin made the ascent on Wednesday, June 30, 1830. "In his Journal the author notes, 'We were very fortunate in the day, as we might have gone up a hundred times, and not have had the view we had that day.' The *brandy* (ll. 22, 245), chronicled with juvenile roguishness, was in those times indispensable to so adventurous an ascent. Jonathan Otley in his guide-book (1834) describing Skiddaw, mentions 'the brandy, which—with a few biscuits or sandwiches—a provident guide will not fail to recommend.' The poem was written at Herne Hill in November and December, and copied into Note-book No. v. above the date of December 26, 1830."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.

"Afterwards the rest of the tour was versified, and the whole copied into No. vii., under the title of 'Iteriad.'"—*Editor's Note*, 1891. Book III., as written, contained 410 lines. The ed. of 1891 contained 148. The following lines, omitted from that edition, are here restored: 3, 4, 13–16, 23, 24, 71, 72, 78–81, 163–66, 193, 194, 267–72. The

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At length into distance the vapours were borne,
And the dreary gloom yields to the rays of the morn:
On the breast of the breeze were the clouds borne away,
And the mountains again were revealed to the day.
The rich outlines of Grasmoor distinctly were seen;
And Helvellyn, it tow'r'd in its silence serene.
While the lake's gentle billows, like pure molten gold,
In soft and low murmurs succeedingly roll'd.
We gazed on that sky, now so azure and bright,—
We gazed on that sky with unmingled delight.
How high beat our hearts with the great expectation!
And straight we began to make great preparation.
Cakes, sandwiches, ham, were by no means unhandy;
And amongst other things we forgot not some brandy.
We bustle and tustle and fidget about,
And call all the servants, and kick up a rout.
We stretch and we yawn, so impatient to go,
And think that the time flies amazingly slow!
We pull out our watch; put it up to our ear;
"Ah well, I declare, it is going, I hear!"
Then in comes the hostess, so prim and so neat,—
"A very fine morning, sir!"—"'Tis, ma'am, indeed."
"I have brought, sir, some skirts for the ladies to ride in;"
"Oh, ma'am, I declare you're extremely obligin'!"
"Oh, sir, pray don't speak of it!" While saying so,
She maketh her exit, in curtseying low.
And now a loud clatter is heard in the yard,
Where the steeds for the journey at length were prepared.
. . . . . .[1]

Oh, what an affair of importance then made is,
While settling and helping and mounting the ladies!
"I am sure I shall fall! I am sure I am tumbling!"—
"Oh, no, ma'am, you're safe."—"But my steed is a-stumbling!"
"Oh, ma'am, he's the surefooted'st beast upon earth!"
"My saddle is loose!"—"Shall I tighten the girth?"

ed. of 1891 read in lines 17, 18, "the" for "that"; in line 201 "and" for "as"; see also note on line 254; in line 258, "at the side"; line 266, "our eyes."

The author's "Argument" to Book III. was as follows:—

ASCENT OF SKIDDAW

Great Preparations—Setting off—Crossing the River—Great Heat—Labour of the Ascent—Stuck in a Bog—Halting-Place—View from it of the Vale of Keswick, Derwent Water, etc.—The Summit—Fine Prospect—Its Particulars described—Keen cutting Wind—Descent—Conclusion.]

[1] [Lines 37–60 are here omitted.]

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"Oh, but look at him now; he is stopping and feeding."
"Pull him up, ma'am!"—"I can't!"—"Then I see I must lead him."
Such pranks and such frolics our chargers displayed,
And such a great bustle and rumpus is made:
At length being seated quite steady and firm,
The heads of our coursers t'wards Skiddaw we turn.
While laughing and talking swift onwards we trot,
And all ills and all accidents soon are forgot.
But some troubles still the ascending attended,
For the road, I must say, wanted much to be mended:
The quagmires were long, and the quagmires were broad,
And many and deep were the ruts of the road.
And unless we kept on at a pretty brisk trot,
Where'er there was grass, there our steeds made a stop;
Nay, more, if at all in a hurry we posted,
With the heat of the sun we were like to be roasted.
And while in the regions of heat we remained,
Of the heat and the flies we all loudly complained.

. . . . . .[1]

But we cared not for mud and we cared not for mire,
For our bosoms beat high with a lofty desire;
When the summit of Skiddaw was once in our view,
Through all opposition resistless we flew!

. . . . . .[2]

Till, having arrived at the breast of the hill,
To rest and to breathe, we a moment stood still.

. . . . . .[3]

[THE VIEW FROM LATRIGG]

The vapourless heaven shone bright overhead,
The valley beneath us was widely outspread;
And the forests, arrayed in their clothing of green,
On the sides of the mountains arising were seen:
While, through the wide valley meandering slow,
The stream of the Derwent doth silently flow.
How fair were the fields which the light lapping wave,
Each following and followed succeeding doth lave;

[1] [Lines 85–98 are here omitted.]
[2] [Lines 103–126 omitted.]
[3] [Lines 129–148 omitted.]

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Till recklessly dancing and carelessly tost,
In the deeps of broad Derwent the billow is lost.
We gazed on the lake,—oh, how calmly it lay,
Scarce touched by the zephyrs o'er 'ts bosom which play!
How bright its smooth surface deceitfully smiles,
Embosomed in mountains, and studded with isles,
Whose trees, richly clothed in a bright living green,
Again seemed to grow 'neath the surface serene.

. . . . . .[1]

Then we gazed down the lake, where swift rushed to the shore
The far-sounding waters of distant Lowdore;
As, hurled down the chasm, how thund'ring it broke,
Rebounding from crag, and rebounding from rock!
And how lightly and brightly the sunny rays play,
While sparkling amid clouds of far flashing spray!
Then we looked to the south, where the dark Borrowdale
Frowned drear o'er the Derwent, stern, savage and fell;
While under those cliffs e'en the surges that sweep
Seemed mournfully silent, dark, dismal and deep.
While hidden in mist, and obscurèd by storm,
Gaunt Castle-Crag rose; oh, how dreadful its form!
As it guarded those Jaws which seemed deep as the grave,
As they frowned o'er the foam of broad Derwent's light wave.

. . . . . .[2]

[THE CLIMB]

Thus the beautiful prospect we all did survey;
Then began to prepare for the rest of the way:
Some sandwiches take, and some brandy we sip,
Applying it just to the tip of the lip.
And our spirits revived, and restorèd our strength,
We set off on the rest of our journey at length.
How jollily onwards we all of us went!
But our eyes to the ground we were forced to keep bent,
For fear that our steeds in their progress should stumble,
And that might produce a most unlucky tumble.
Avoiding each hillock, each stone and each stick,
The steps of our steeds we most[3] carefully pick.

[1] [Lines 165–180 omitted.]
[2] [Lines 195–234 omitted.]
[3] [The ed. of 1891, here following MS. vii., read, "steps of our ponies we," and in the next line inserted "still" after "and."]

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And we ascended, still higher and higher,
And still to the summit came nigher and nigher.
And still we kept laughing and talking, and still
We trotted along on the side of the hill,
Till we reached an ascent where low hillocks of green,
Like mountainous molehills, were everywhere seen.
We dashed on our steeds and we spurred up the rise;—
Oh sight most delightful that greeted our eyes!
A ridge we beheld ('twas of loose slaty stone);
It led to the summit we'd wished for so long.
But now our teeth chattered, our noses looked blue
And our ears were assuming a ruby-like hue.
For the wind, I should tell that it blew from the east,
And that is an icyish quarter at best;
I mean it is cold whensoever it blows,
But now it had taken such hold of our nose
That we cried out, "Oh dear, 'tis tremendously cold,"
And round all the circle the same accents rolled.
Then to guard 'gainst the cold we did button our coats,
Protecting our bodies with mantles and cloaks;
Then tight round our necks we did tie our cravats,
More firm to our heads we did fasten our hats:
Then, steady and ready, we made up our mind
To fight and to conquer the cold and the wind.
So struggling we forced o'er the ridge of loose stone,—
Every second we thought we should over be blown;
And although of its force we did loudly complain,
The summit of Skiddaw at last we attain.
. . . . . .[1]

[THE SUMMIT]

How frowned the dark rocks which, bare, savage and wild,
In heaps upon heaps were tremendously piled!
And how vast the ravines which, so craggy and deep,
Down dreadful descending divided the steep!
Stay! hark to the eagle![2] how shrill is its cry,
From the breast of the hill which re-echoes on high!

[1] [Lines 275–338 omitted.]

[2] ["The more one reads the boy's poem, the more one is struck with the way in which that little lad of eleven saw and noted what was really best worth seeing in the district. The main features of the scene of Derwent Water and its isles from Latrigg, the summit of Skiddaw, with its loose shales and its bitter, wind-blown ridge, are faithfully described, though he was in error in taking a buzzard for an eagle" (H. D. Rawnsley, *Ruskin and the English Lakes*, 1901, p. 4).]

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Then, borne on the breezes which softly do play,
Tow'rd the fells of the Derwent it dieth away.
Again from these rocks it doth suddenly break,
And sounding as shrilly, it sweeps o'er the lake;
Then echoed again from gigantic Grasmoor,
And sharply rebounding from shore unto shore.
But where is the mountain-bird? Where doth he spring?
Where beats the breeze backward the flap of his wing?
Lo, see where, impelled by his tempest-like force,
In cloud-hidden circles he wheels on his course;
O'er the rock-beating torrent he fearless is soaring;
Scarce hearing its thunders eternally roaring!
Then turned we around to the maze of the mountains,
All teeming and sparkling with thousand bright fountains:
Where the brow of Helvellyn superior tow'r'd,—
Where the beetling Scawfell so tremendously low'r'd,—
Tost confus'dly in clusters all barren and grim,
While the clouds o'er their sky-braving battlements skim;
Till, their scarce-discerned outlines all misty and grey,
On the distant horizon they faded away.

. . . . . .[1]

[HAEC OLIM MEMINISSE]

Now tell me, O reader, hast tasted repose
When toilings and labours have come to a close?
Hast thou gloried when thou hast successfully toiled
In overcome dangers and diff'culties foiled?
Oh, then and then only thou fitly canst tell
How our hearts lightly beat and our proud bosoms swell.
Delighted we sat round the bright blazing fire,
And talked of our hardships,—the mountain, the mire.
Though other things sink in the chaos of thought,
And fly from our mem'ry, let all be forgot,
As light chaff is borne on the face of the wind,
Yet Skiddaw shall ne'er be erased from our mind.

26th December, 1830.[2]

[1] [Lines 365–392 omitted.]

[2] [So dated in MS. v., no doubt as then finished and fair-copied—*i.e.* this piece of the "Iteriad," the intention being as stated above, p. 286 *n.*]

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BOOK IV[1]

THE morning arrived o'er Shapfell's rugged crest;
Arose the bright sun in the gorgeous east;
But ah! far too swift flew the moments away,
And the hours strode along and dragged onward the day,
Till the moment arrived. We unwillingly gave
The last longing look to the islanded wave,
Regretting that now from its bosom we drove.
Tow'rds the wild moors of Penrith we silently rove;
Through the glen of the Greta a passage we found,
And round the huge Saddleback's forehead we wound.
By-the-bye, I should think he'd a good deal of sense,
For although his huge pate be prodigiously dense,
And although very leaden be his comprehension,
Yet his forehead I'm sure is of mighty extension;
And, sir, you perhaps may be now recollecting
There are plenty of brains where the forehead's projecting.

. . . .

[MYTHOLOGICAL METEOROLOGY]

THE morning was lovely: the bright azure sky
With light, fleecy clouds it was studded on high,
As if Jupiter's sheep from their fold they had strayed,
And o'er their blue meadows a ramble had made.
Perhaps you will say that the gods had no sheep!
Sir, I will not enter on argument deep.
But this I will say that you must recollect, sir,
That their goblets of gold were filled brimful of nectar:
And this to th' opinion perhaps may give rise,—
They had plenty of nectarine trees in the skies!

[1] [The author's "Argument" is as follows:—

Return to Low-wood and Kendal—Moors near Penrith—Ullswater—Lyulph's Tower—Inn—Evening Walk—Landlady's Impudence—Four Horses, Kirkstone—Coming down upon Ambleside—Low-wood—Rowing of the ladies, etc., etc.—Excursion to Coniston—Bowness—Fine View of the Lake and Return to Kendal—Conclusion of the "Iteriad."

Book IV., as written, contained 696 lines. The ed. of 1891 gave 210. The following lines, omitted in that edition, are here restored: 1–16, 75–86, 129, 130, 451–54, 493–96, 503–6, 535–38, 543–48, 559, 560. The ed. of 1891 reads in line 145 "Still" for "And"; in line 415 "all" for "well"; and in 423 "our" for "the," and "bedrooms" for "bedroom"; see also notes on lines 386, 488, and 572.]

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And as to their having a good flock of sheep,—
If they drank, I should think they had something to eat:
And, although if they didn't, I care not a button,
The gods lived on something; oh, why not on mutton?
. . . . . .[1]

[ULLSWATER; A DIGRESSION]

Right in the front, all so dark and so deep,
Azurely gloomy lay Ulleswater's sheet.
Like a Leviathan resting there,
It lay all so mighty, so placid and fair;
Deeply deceitful, deceitfully calm,
As if it were bound by some wonderful charm.
As if it were shunning the gorgeous day,
Mountain embosomed, secluded it lay;
While beyond that so blue and so beautiful flood
The mighty Place-fell all so haughtily stood
And heaped his huge crags so confusedly high,
As if boring a hole in the blue coloured sky.
. . . . . .[2]

Now were I,—oh, were I a proper lake-poet
—Although you will say, "'Tis in vain, that;"—I know it!
But I cannot do what I know that I should,—
Pop in an address to the nymph solitude.
Oh, beautiful,—beautiful should my muse make her,
With a "thou" and a "thee" like the words of a quaker,
All so fine.—"Thou companion of night, the black brow'd,
Who spreads o'er all nature her star-spangled shroud"——
'Tis in vain,—'tis in vain! I am not a lake-poet!
I knew from the first on't that I couldn't do it,
Oh, pray, oh Melpomene, help me up here!
I never shall do for the fashion, I fear:
Spite of all the endeavour by poor me that made is,
I shall miss the applause of the misses and ladies.
For contrary unto the laws that are writ
In nature's own code, every Miss makes a hit

[1] [Lines 31–74, describing the drive from Keswick, omitted. They drove where now the railway goes as far as the present Troutbeck station; then turning to the right and passing Mell Fell, descended to Ullswater.]

[2] [Lines 87–102, describing the further descent to Lyulph's Tower, omitted.]

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At poor me and my rhymes, for they're not sentimental,
And so to the—stop!—to oblivion they're sent all.
But the poets forget, when they praise solitude,
That by rights upon her they should never intrude;
And therefore, if truly and rightly 'twere known,
They praise her the best when they let her alone.

But I am digressive! Oh, pray, do not blame me!
In description I know it would go on but lamely.
You know that description alone, it would be, sir,
A tedious thing that would tire you and me, sir.
All mountains and lakes would be very humdrum,
In a very short while you'd be wanting some fun.
You'd find, sir, in spite of the grand and sublime
A little ridiculous wanting in time.
It's all very well to address melancholy,
And the night, and the morning, and other such folly;
Or a sonnet to night-loving, fair Philomel,—
In a fine lady's album these look very well.
But though you may think me prodigiously assical
I do like some fun—something that's Hudibrastical.
Let every pert miss interrupt me in middle,
With a proper, school-bred, and genteel kind of giggle—
"I, I"—oh, dear me!—But I'll make a confession
—I'm digressive when I do but talk of digression.

'Tis enough: I go on. By the banks of the lake
Tow'rds fair Patterdale we our progress did take;
And hoping each house that we saw on before
Would turn out the inn on the waves' woody shore:
Though we wondering saw that our horses did trot
To the lake's extreme end, and that still we stopped not.
And when full half a mile from its verge we advance,
Despair threw our minds in a wondering trance.
And certes not less than that distance we drive,
Until at the house, or the inn, we arrive.

Now, though I be called an egregious sinner,
I had not forgot at Ulleswater my dinner.
In the good open air it is well to be lunching,
—You always see scenery best when you're munching.
You'd think the view beautiful, if in his hand each
'Tween finger and thumb had a mustarded sandwich:
The mutton alive, which away from you fled,
Would look better if you had a little on't dead.
Remember old Skiddaw! The sandwiches there
Drove off all the cold of the rarefied air!

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Can one relish a view without any provision—
Not at all fortified with the beef-ammunition?
Impossible! 'Tis very well, sir, for you,
Who a good appetite, sir, perhaps never knew!
. . . . . .[1]

[COMING DOWN FROM KIRKSTONE]

Oh, then was a time when we gazèd once more
Upon Windermere's woody and wavering shore;
On the gloomy ravine where we first saw the stream
Dash down those rude rocks 'mid that mountainous scene;[2]
On the smoke which curled up to a slight elevation
From the tree-buried lum[3] of the inn "Salutation";
On the bridge over which lay our Keswick-bound track,
When we left the fair scene to which now we came back;
On the house which we saw from our darling Low-wood—[4]
By-the-bye, 'twas a beautiful nook where it stood:
'Twas snugly embayed by the side of the lake,
Just where the two rivers do into it break.
I'd like such a house:—and yet, no,—I would not:
There's a circumstance I had completely forgot;
If these gingerbread houses—there now are but few,
And they rather improve, not disfigure the view,—
But I say, if these things were allowed to increase,
And disturb in that landscape its own native peace,

[1] [Lines 167–382, describing some further stay at Patterdale, omitted. Dinner continues to occupy a good deal of space, and leads to a digression about the lake fish, which in turn leads to the question of angling (187–90):—

"Because my Lord Byron has much deprecated it,
And mightily, mightily, much he has rated it;
And at it again was the good Doctor Johnson,
But I mustn't face him, I'd as soon face a monsoon."

The sudden return of the party, driven in by heavy rain, is also described (215–6):—

"Old Virgil himself could not tell how we flew,
With his 'quadrupedante putrem sonitu'" (*Aen.* viii. 596).]

[2] [The ed. of 1891 here alters "scene" to "dream," and, two lines above, reads "waving" for "wavering"—an error in MS. vii.]

[3] [Lum, Scottish for chimney: as in Hogg's *The Witch of Fife*, "And out at the lum flew he."]

[4] ["Brathay Hall. Forty years later, Mr. Ruskin got 'such a house,' and got it without stultifying his early ideal; for though he has added to Brantwood, the original house is an old one."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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No longer 'twould be all so lovelily lone,
And the mightiness, silence, and grandeur be gone.[1]
But, reader, I'm slow, and you'll go on without me:
I was in a parenthesis, looking about me!
We gazed upon all that there was to be seen,—
On the lake that was blue,—on the fields that were green,—
On the dome of the sky, of such mighty extension,
And other small things that we needn't here mention.
But we stayed not our steps, for, the chariot entering,
We soon to our Low-wood were rapidly cantering.
And gallantly, gallantly onward we bore,
Till the driver reined up all our steeds at the door.
Bobbed out Mrs. Jackson with "How d'ye do, sir?
I hope you're quite well; and miss, madam, and you, sir?
Your beds are well aired, and your rooms are all ready.
These horses are troublesome;—steady, Jack, steady!
The flies do so tease them. But pray, sir, come in;
It soon will be raining, sir; do come within!"
. . . . . .[2]
And then to the parlour and bedroom she brought us,
And we, very happily, took up our quarters.
Now, reader, I spare thee! at length will my pen
Its galloping course condescend to rein in:
For while the short week that I was not a rover
Full many adventures and things I pass over.
. . . . . .[3]
Let's see:—I could tell more than ever you'd read, sir;
So I'll give ye one pleasant excursion instead, sir.

[EXCURSION TO CONISTON]

The people of Low-wood one opening day
Intended to cut for the horses the hay:
And said, when a moment the sun chose to shine,
That they were quite certain the day would be fine.
We trusted to them; they, again, to the sky
Which told, or which looked, an egregious lie!
Oh Jove, naughty Jove, that did'st give such a thumper,
When you really intended to give us a plumper,
Why, tell me why, not a few signs in the air?—
But I will not reproach you, sir, for you don't care.

[1] [Ruskin's mind was already exercised, it will be seen, with questions which he afterwards worked out in *The Poetry of Architecture*, §§ 104, 217, etc.; see Vol. I.]
[2] [Lines 419–422, further describing the landlady, omitted.]
[3] [Lines 429–442, describing boating with "the ladies," omitted.]

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Quite prepared for the rain, but yet caring no less,
We thundered all off on the road to Bowness.
. . . . . .[1]

The lake, like the tale of the bear and the fiddle,
Is almost cut off by two capes in the middle,
That the waters may not bar the path of the rover,
A kind of a hobblety boat paddles over;
And, in order to urge on its clumsiness fast,
They've got a huge oar that might do for a mast:
And, what is much worse, they have not got a sail,
That might catch in its foldings the breath of the gale.
So, o'er the dark waters they lump and they lumber,
And over the lake they do bump and they blunder;
With us all behind, and the horses before,
And the coach in the centre, we get to the shore.
They tumbled us out as they bundled us in,
At the risk of immersing us up to the chin:
And instead of us paying, sir, they in a trice
Demanded and asked an exorbitant price!
But we could not avoid it,—so, paid it; and then
We galloped by mountain, and torrent, and glen.

But although the wide heavens kept fair for a while,
Yet, ere we had passed by much more than a mile,
In lowering aspect began they to frown.
Then,—then,—"Well, what then?"—then the shower came down!
"Oh, is that all?"—Dear sir, pray what would you have more?
"Oh, that's quite enough; but I knew it before."
What, did you, sir? Dear me, 'twas much more than *I* did;
I knew not at all how it would be decided.
But anyhow, now, the decision's a bad one
To pepper us—'deed, a prodigiously sad one.
We groaned in our hearts, but we did not complain,
When we knew, if we did so, the more it would rain.
But although we restrained all our anger for that,
When we saw the Old Man would keep on his night cap,
Oh! then we burst out in expressions of sorrow
And cries that it would not be fair till to-morrow.
We looked on the mountains obscured by the rain;
We looked on the streams from their summits which came,[2]
And, down into Coniston's waters careering,
With furrows full deep the dark mountains were searing;
No outlines were seen of their rock-broken form,
All darkly obscured by the mist and the storm.

[1] [Lines 457–462, describing the arrival at the ferry across Windermere, omitted.]
[2] [So both MSS.; the ed. of 1891 reads "cloud" and "flowed" at the end of these two lines.]

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While the fiend of the tempest howled loudly and long,
And the kelpie was yelling his ominous song,
And the eagle had flown to her nest in the rock,
And the caverns afforded a home for the flock.
And the birds sang not now to the murmuring floods,
For each of them fled to his home in the woods;
And the torrents in cataracts fiercely did pour,
And to their wild roaring re-echoed the shore;
And bent to the force of the wind every tree
As that tempest was pouring its own melodie.
. . . . . .[1]

Although it was placed in a fine situation,
The inn did not equal our anticipation;
It might be the day,—and I will not deny it,—
For really the lake was most beautiful by it.
Of fair-weather prophecies mind you be wary,
For the day made old Coniston look solitary:
And, what made it worse, we had nothing to do,
Save watching the course of the clouds as they flew,
Or counting the ripples that rolled to the strand,
Or looking where lingered the slow minute-hand.
Or gazing full listlessly on the lone lake
And its waves as in impotent foaming they break;
Or watching the course of some light fishing skiff,
Or walking about in the room in a miff.
Sometimes we looked up at the troublesome sky,
And peeped through the breaks of the clouds, riding by;
Though we saw that they rather grew darker than thinner,—
Till a respite appeared in the entrance of dinner.
We were monstrously hungry; so do not you marvel
That we did not take time nor attempt for to carve well;
So went to the business at once, and indeed
For capital carving there wasn't much need;
So declared with the viands immediate war
And dined upon taties and fine potted char.

When dinner was over, as still it did rain,
We thought that we scarcely need longer remain:
So, ordered the carriage, and with no good will,
We ordered that pest of all travels—the bill.
May the money bear witness how quickly they made it!
—Much quicker than we were inclined to have paid it.
Though, without further grumbling, the silver we gave,
And galloped away from old Coniston's wave.[2]

[1] [Lines 513–524, describing a rapid drive in the rain, omitted.]

[2] ["This was not the author's first introduction to Coniston; he had visited it in 1824 and 1826: . . . the minuteness and accuracy of the descriptions in the 'Iteriad'

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Yet, ere we should leave it in tempest and rain,[1]
We, turning, looked back on its waters again.
With its deep-bosomed billows in front lay the lake,
Whose waters divided by mountain and cape,
All open and bare they, full lonely, did lie,
Exposing their breast to the shadowy sky:
Retiring in distance they mistily lay;
And fainter each inlet, and softer each bay;
Till, appearing no more, by the wild tempest tost,
'Mid mountains and clouds in the distance were lost.
These mountains, all mistily softened away,
Appeared like thin clouds at the dawn of the day;
Still darker and deeper, in bolder relief,
As, nearer approaching, and rising the chief,
The mighty Old Man, with his dark summit reft
Nearer and sterner [1] arose on our left.

. . . . . .[2]

Farewell to the lake, and farewell to the mountain,—
The tarn, and the torrent,—the fall, and the fountain,—
To the deeps of the dell, and the wood-shaded shore;—
Thou land of the mountains, I see thee no more![3]

evince more familiarity with the Lake District than could have been gained in this hasty tour,—at least they are much ampler than the descriptions in the Journal. 'The inn at Coniston was then actually at the upper end of the lake, the road from Ambleside to the village passing just between it and the water; and the view of the long reach of lake, with its softly wooded lateral hills, had for my father a tender charm which excited the same feeling as that with which he afterwards regarded the lakes of Italy' (*Prætorita*, i. ch. v. § 107). On this visit, July 6, 1830, the Journal notes: 'We had some very fine char for dinner. . . . Although it was a wet day, we enjoyed ourselves very much.' The char satisfactorily accounts for the heavy bill."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[1] [The ed. of 1891 reads "closing the prospect," from the earlier MS. (vi.), instead of "nearer and sterner."]

[2] [Lines 573–692, describing the rest of the stay at Low-wood and the return to Kendal, omitted. Amongst these lines is a description of a dog who attached himself to the party,

"And of old Mr. Wordsworth at chapel of Rydal,
Whom we had the honour of seeing beside all."]

[3] [In one of the MS. Note-books (No. vi.) there is the following "Conclusion of Iteriad":—

"Farewell to each mountain and torrent and river,
Farewell, but it is not a farewell for ever.
Oh no, I will see thee again, oh Scawfell,
Though now I may bid thee a mournful farewell.
Yes, Windermere, yes, I must travel from thee,
From thy bosom, thy beautiful bosom, I flee.
But yet thou hast graven thyself on my mind,
And hast left the impression so deeply behind,
That time has no power to destroy or erase,
Nor one line of that picture at all to efface."]

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1831

(AT 12 YEARS OF AGE)[1]

TO MY HEART[2]

1

Why leapest thou,
Why leapest thou
So high within my breast?
Oh, stay thee now,
Oh, stay thee now,
Thou little bounder, rest!

2

"I will not stay,
I will not stay,
For nought but joy I know;
For I must stay
On a future day,
Not ignorant, *then*, of woe.

3

"Oh, let me leap,
Oh, let me leap,
Till that sad day shall come,
When thou shalt weep
In sorrow deep
For days of gladness gone."

4

Oh, say not so,
Oh, say not so,
My heart, oh, do not say,
That bitter draught
Shall e'er be quaffed—
Shall e'er be drained by me!

[1] [The first piece of this year was "The Fairies," here reproduced in facsimile; it is dated in an earlier MS. copy (Book v.), January 5, 1831. In the *Poems*, 1891, it was given in facsimile (vol. i., between pp. 78–79); and also printed at vol. i. pp. 279–280: the printed version reads "send" for "shed" in stanza 4.

The principal work of 1831 was the "Iteriad," but the MS. books contain a large number of shorter pieces besides the examples here given. One of the longest, called "Athens," contains several classical allusions. In the preceding autumn Ruskin had begun the study of Greek; one or two words occur in unprinted passages of the "Iteriad" (see *Præterita*, i. ch. iv. § 81). In the summer of 1831, the tour (May 25–July 21) included a visit to Wales. The route was by way of Dover, Margate, Southampton, Portsmouth, Stonehenge, Hereford, Devil's Bridge, Hafod, Aberystwith, Dolgelly, Cader Idris, Barmouth, Harlech, Carnarvon, Snowdon, Conway, Llangollen, Chepstow, Clifton, Newbury. During this tour Ruskin wrote "To the Ocean Spirits" and "To the Fairies"; and, suggested by Wales, on his return home, "The Eternal Hills," "Moonlight on the Mountains," and "Harlech Castle." It was in this year that Ruskin began mathematics under Mr. Rowbotham (see below, p. 326), and also to read Byron, whose influence will be observed in some pieces of the time (see pp. 326 *n*, 329 *n*).]

[2] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 79–81. The MS. is in Book v.]

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I wanderd forth at midnight
And silently silently rove
Where the moonlight poured
On the dewy sward
And on the elfin grove
Twas a kind of fairy scenery
A kind of airy dreamery
Such silence as I love

When from the wood around me
The elfin circles skim
Hand in hand
They join the band
And in the dances swim
And there they bounded merrily
While sailing round me giddily
And breezy numbers sing

How softly softly murmuring
In sinking cadence low
And now they seem
Of joy to sing
And now to sing of woe
As sweetly sweetly whispering

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Those carols greet me listening
And harmoniously flow

Thus ran the song Ye fairies
Now swiftly swiftly bound
Ere yet the day
In twilight gray
Shall shed its light around
Spring oer the dewdrop shivering
Touch not the grassblade quivering
While vaulting from the ground

Still circling on the green sward
Exert your nimble feet
Dance dance away
Ye fairies gay
And ply your footsteps fleet
Ye sprites ye elfins wantoning
Amongst the cowslips frolicking
Here let your dances meet

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5

"And shalt thou not
Know mankind's lot,
Shalt thou from it be free?
In future years
That lot of tears
Shall fix itself on thee.

6

"Then let me leap,
Then let me leap,
Till that dread day shall come,
When thou shalt weep
In anguish deep
For paths of pleasure run.

7

"When age is come
And youth is done—
That youth so briefly given,—
Thou then shalt trust
No more in dust,
But fix thy hope on heaven."

26 *January.*

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TO POESIE[1]

1

Oh, what art thou,—Oh, what art thou,
  Thou thing of living fire?
The laurels are twined around thy brow,
  And thy hand is on the lyre,
Which breathes such notes of harmony
As make the young heart lighter leap,
And with greater rapture beat:
  Oh, what art thou?

2

Thou art a thing of nothingness,
  Thou art fancy's wayward child;
Thou art a thing of brightest bliss;
Thy lips are breathing happiness,
  In thy numbers wandering wild.

3

Thou art the burstings of the heart,
  The language of the fiery soul;
    Thou art nature's voice and tone:
  While as thy numbers higher roll,
In mystic harmony,
    With soundings all thine own.

4

When the brightest gems of heaven
  Pour their radiance on earth,
    And all are lost in sleep,
    Then thou, then thou dost sweep
The chords of thine impassioned lyre,
  And unto thoughts and images give birth,
And pour thy lay unto the listening moon,
  And fill the heavens with harmony
    As pure, as high as they.

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 82–83. From MS. Book v. There is a first draft in vi.]

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5

When the wave doth madly fling
His spray, and the thunders roll in heaven,
And the lightnings illumine the deep,
And the tempests wildly sweep;
Then thou dost cast thy numbers
Upon its[1] angry wing;
Mingle thy voice with the thunders,
And notes of woe, and notes of dread,
In various lyrics sing.

March 11.

[1] [So in the MS.; *i.e.* the wave's; "their" in the ed. of 1891.]

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WANT OF A SUBJECT[1]

1

I WANT a thing to write upon,
But I cannot find one;
And I have wanted one so long
That I must write on—none!

2

I think of speeches to the sea,—
Its colour azure blue,
And all its moaning minstrelsy,—
That a'n't it,—that won't do!

3

I think of speeches to the ground,
And all its flowers too,
And all the treasures in it[2] found,—
That a'n't it,—that won't do!

4

I think of speeches to the sky,—
Its far expanse so blue,
And all its starry majesty,—
That a'n't it,—that won't do!

5

I think of Saturday's dread night,
Its apparatus too,
Beside its bason blue and white,—
That a'n't it,—that won't do!

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 84–86. The first draft is in MS. Book vi.; a fair copy in v. The lines seem to have been written under the influence of Hood's lighter pieces; such, *e.g.*, as the lines "Written in a Young Lady's Album."]

[2] [Ruskin's early pieces were, as we have seen, carefully treasured by his father, who also sometimes corrected them; thus here, "that are found" was altered by him to "in it found." So in stanza 7, the third line is his father's emendation of "And parties gay to parties meet." Stanza 7 is, however, omitted in the fair copy.]

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6

Think of the poultry; how the cock
To's dames the morsel threw;
How to the dainty bit they flock,—
That a'n't it,—that won't do!

7

I think of New-Year's-day, replete
With joys and pleasures new,
When parties gay with parties meet—
That a'n't it,—that won't do!

8

Though many, many, many a thing
Doth flit my brain about,
As quickly as they scamper in,
So quickly they're kicked—out!

9

And following thoughts on thoughts so fleet,
But still none of them suit;
And I—I am almost asleep,
And still my muse is mute.

10

And lest she urge her airy flight
From my so drowsy brain,
Upon no subject I will write,
That so she may remain.

[*About March.*]

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TO THE OCEAN-SPIRITS [1]

Ye, who dwell in the coral caves,
  Where the billows ever sleep;
Ye, who ride on the briny waves,
  Spirits of the deep—
Of the mighty and dark and unsearchable deep—
  Hither, come hither all!
Glide ye and sail ye and sport ye there,
Mermaids all with the golden hair?
Or do ye silence the sounding sea,—
Do you sing him to sleep with your melody?
Do ye lie on the weedy rocks so cold,
Where the greedy surge has ever rolled?
Or braid ye your flowing hair with pearls,
Strewing them all in the golden curls?
  Hither, come hither all!
Mingle your voices with the sea,
Sing me a joyous melody.
Let the waves from your breath rebounding
Dash on the vocal rocks resounding.
Now is the hour ere the red sun bathes
  His sides in the rosy deep;
Ere he nods his head to the laughing waves,
  To his rolling couch of sleep.

Mermaids (*sing*)

We are capricious ocean's daughters,
Children of the inconstant waters;
In our coral caverns, we
Live in mirth and minstrelsy:
Sport we all in depths unknown,
In places silent, dark and lone.
We have seen the dead man's skull
With pearly shells and seaweeds full;
But ever he grasped with convulsive hold
The chest where lay the mouldy gold.

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 87–88. From MS. Book v. The ed. of 1891 omits "the" in line 8.]

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Oh, well [1] we love to swim the deep,
And cut the foam so fast and fleet;
While Tritons with the vocal shell
In our train their music swell.
The very sharks lift up their head
From crunching and crashing the bones of the dead;
And, as we pass them swiftly by,
List to the shelly harmony.

Enough, enough! the song is done;
Sinks beneath the deep the sun,
Down, down, down,
To the depths of the ocean down.
Away, away, ye nymphs, away!
Darkness shrouds the closing day.

20 *June.*

[1] [Here again, "Oh, well" is his father's correction of "For, oh!"]

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TO THE FAIRIES [1]

Ye, who sport in the lone midnight,
By the paly, round moon's flickering light:
Ye, who dance in your forests lone,
Till the pale glow-worm lights you home,
Hither, come hither all!
Do ye sing to the nightingale?
Do ye lie in a cowslip's bell?
Or do ye drink from the acorn-cups
The dew ye love so well?
Ere the day, the rosy day,
From forth its couch shall rise,
And throw aside its mantle grey
For a red one in the skies,
Hither, come hither all!
And, like the gentle, peaceful dove,
Who to his mate now coos his love;
Or like the plaintive nightingale,
Who telleth now his lonely tale,
Sing ye your carols unto me
With midnight mirth and melody.

FAIRIES (*sing*)

Evil spirits, black and dun,
To our revels do not come,
In the church-yards dark and lone,
By the pale, inscriptioned stone.
Fly ye from this sacred ground,
Nor be in our circles found!
Riding on the grey bat's wings,
Hum ye from our dancing rings
Away, away, away!
Oh, how we love to sport us now,
When all unclouded is the brow
Of the bright, benignant moon
'Mid a half enlightened gloom;
And every tree doth bend its head,
As lightly o'er the grass we tread;

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 89–91. From MS. Book v.]

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And, as we dance [on][1] dewy mounds,
They list to hear the jocund sounds
That whisper round their aged roots.
For oh, we love to lie 'mid flowers,
And sleep amid the violets,
Until the dawning hours.
Till the sun lights the morning dew
That glisters on the ground,
Amid the forests we are found,
Frolicking all the woodlands through!
Stay, stay, stay!
The dawn upon the hills appears,
The dew shines on the grass like tears,
At the approach of day
Silence!
Vanish, every elf and fay![2]

20 *June.*

[1] [So the ed. of 1891; the MS. reads "our," the sense of which is difficult to follow.]

[2] [The next two poems in the MS. (v.) both dated "22 June" are addressed "To the Spirits of the Earth and the Fire," thus completing a series of four dealing with earth, air (the Fairies), fire and water.]

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[BED-TIME][1]

"Now go, my dear. 'Tis time to go to bed."
  Oh, direful sentence; all so full of woe!
Oh dear! how mournfully those words are said,
  —So contradictory,—"*Come*, dear, and *go!*"
When anything had come into my head
  To all composing 'tis the fiercest foe.
I wish Mamma a little less would load us
With so much of *imperativus modus*.

When Mr. —— What d'ye call him?—Bottom-roe?
  No, that's not it . . . Oh ay, it is Roebotham—[2]
Has ceased his parallelograms to show
  And t'other thingumbobs—I have forgot 'em!
With latitude and longitude, you know,
  And all the other things there's such a lot on,
Why, then I cannot have a little play, sir;
For, "Go away to bed" Mamma doth say, sir.

When I have drudged all day at dry perspective,
  And some nice clever book I have begun,
Against those words there must be no invective,—
  I cannot have a little bit of fun;
For of the time Mamma's so recollective,
  You might as well attempt to cheat the sun!
And nothing pleasant can I then begin it,
Mamma so regularly counts each minute!

[*About September.*]

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 92–93. From MS. Book vi.]

[2] ["'A master was found for me to teach me mathematics. Mr. Rowbotham was an extremely industrious, deserving, and fairly well-informed person in his own branches, who . . . kept a "young gentlemen's Academy" near the Elephant and Castle. . . . Under the tuition, twice a week in the evening, of Mr. Rowbotham, I prospered fairly in 1834' (*Præterita*, i. ch. iv. §§ 93, 94). I venture to suggest that it must have been before 1834 that Mr. Rowbotham began to teach the author, since this poem, from its style, handwriting, and position in Note-book No. vi., must certainly be dated about September 1831. The misspelling of the name (Roebotham) looks as though he were quite a new acquaintance. The metre shows the first definite trace of Byron's influence; he had begun to read Byron early in this year."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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[TO THE MEMORY OF SIR WALTER SCOTT][1]

'Twas night. I stood by Tweed's[2] fair stream.
Methought it sung a dirge for him
Who once on its green borders drew
The fanciful, the fairy crew
And seemed a voice, in measured tone,
To breathe a melancholy moan.
And, whispering, sullen soundings sighed,
As mingling with the murmuring tide;
And sorrowing notes of woe they gave,
As floating on the mystic wave.
And, with the waters borne along,
They joined with every zephyr's song.
The billows wept that they no more,
When rolling tow'rds the hallowed shore,
Might dance unto the living lays
That minstrel's magic voice could raise;
Where every mocking mountain rung
With the rich numbers that he sung;
Where piny forests, when he spoke,
Their hoary locks in wonder shook;
And bent their spiry heads, when he
Charmed Scotland's hills with melody.

October.

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 94–95, where line 2 reads "sang" for sung"; line 15, "into" for "unto"; lines 17, 18, "rang" and "sang"; and in the last line, "harmony" for "melody." The MS. is in Book viii. "Sir Walter had left Scotland in the previous month, September 1831; and was not expected to survive long. His death is commemorated in 'The Grave of the Poet' (p. 337)."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[2] [The MS. has originally "Avon's," so that the first intention was to write on Shakespeare. Ruskin had been at Stratford-upon-Aven in the summer of 1830. Among the unpublished pieces of 1831, there is one on "Shakespeare's Grave."]

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[THE ETERNAL HILLS][1]

I love ye, ye eternal hills,
With the mists all wreathed around ye;
I love ye, all ye cloud-born rills,
As ye beat the rocks that bound ye.
I've seen ye when the huge storm-fiend
From his peaceful sleep doth rouse,
And the misty coronet doth bend
On your mighty, shaggèd brows;
A thing of might
In his gloomy flight,
As he buries ye, hills, in his stormy night.

I love ye, I love ye, ye mighty things,
With your huge and frowning fells;
When the eagle flaps his nervous wings,
And the tempest round ye swells.
I've seen ye with your forests hoar,
As they nod o'er your crags all lone,
And your crags do shake 'neath the torrent's roar,
And are snowed with rock-borne foam,
As they wake from their sleep
When those waters leap
Into your caverns dark and deep.

[*About October.*]

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 96–97, where in line 7 "bend" is printed "bind," and the third "ye" is omitted in line 12. From MS. Book vi. "'The Eternal Hills,' written at Herne Hill about October, was probably inspired by Snowdon. 'My first sight of bolder scenery was in Wales. . . . We went . . . to Llanberis and up Snowdon' (*Præterita*, i. ch. v. §§ 108, 109). 'Harlech Castle' was another reminiscence of this tour; and 'Moonlight on the Mountains' is quite Snowdonian in character."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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THE SITE OF BABYLON[1]

1

THE desert stretched its ocean sweep,
All vast and boundless as the deep
  In mighty solitude;
Night, like a lion o'er his prey,
Above the vast, the desert way,
  In silence stern did brood.
I stood beside one tree that flung
A gloomy shadow, where it hung;
And not a column,—not a stone—
Marked out the site of Babylon.

2

Where art thou now, thou haughty one,
Whose mighty walls so often rung
  With the proud feasts of kings?
And foaming wine in golden bowls
Has flowed, where now the lion prowls
  And the hoarse night-breeze sings.
Alas! that mightiness is fled,
Barbaric pomp is witherèd;
And o'er the eastern glory's grave
Euphrates rolls his gloomy wave.

6–10 *November*, 1831.

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 98–99. A draft of the verses is in MS. Book viii.; a fair copy in v. "This and 'The Destruction of Pharaoh' (p. 336) seem to be modelled on the 'Hebrew Melodies,' and exhibit a more sonorous and *intellectual* style, derived from Byron (*Præterita*, i. ch. viii. § 163), which displaces the earlier juvenile jingle."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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[MOONLIGHT ON THE MOUNTAINS][1]

1

Curtained in cloudy drapery
The stars were glimmering on high,
All with light festoonery
Round their fulgent centre queen,
Fleecily, as veiled between
Sate she, and with them did roll
Round the fixed, eternal pole.

2

Folding, like an airy vest,
The very clouds had sunk to rest;
Light gilds the rugged mountain's breast,
Calmly as they lay below;
Every hill seemed topped with snow,
As the flowing tide of light
Broke the slumbers of the night.

30 *November.*

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 100, where in line 3 "a" is inserted before "light." The draft (in MS. Book viii.) contains three additional stanzas, which are faulty in rhyme and are not fair-copied (Book v.).]

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SONNET

HARLECH CASTLE [1]

I've seen thy mighty towers and turrets high,
Like crown imperial on some rocky head,
'Mid the eternal hills so darkly spread
Round the huge Snowdon's mountain majesty,
Shunning the earth, enamoured of the sky,—
Ruined remembrance of the silent dead,
Now sleeping in a mountain-guarded bed,
That once did stir these walls with revelry.

And all and aught that once was great is gone!
Doth the cold ivy round thy ruins fling
Its twining arms to clothe the naked stone:
Flaps round the keep the lazy owlet's wing.
—So mighty, so majestic, and so lone!
—And all thy music, now, the ocean's murmuring!

[*End of* 1831.]

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 101. From MS. Book viii.]

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SONNET TO A CLOUD[1]

Thou little roamer of the northern blast,
  Mantling the brow of ruby-fringèd morn,
  So swift, so transient,—whither art thou borne?
Hither and thither by the breezes cast,
Hast shadowed sultry Araby, or past—
  Lumed by the lightening—on the gloomy storm?
  Or dimmed the lustre of the moonè's horn?
Or swept o'er mountain-summit, fleet and fast?
Or darkened o'er the bosom of the brine?
  Or, wanton, fled the summer breeze's sigh,
And floated o'er a thirsty, scorching clime,
  Fading upon the clear and azure sky?
—Methinks I see thee, like the wing of time
  Melting away into eternity!

[*End of* 1831.]

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 102. There is a draft in MS. Book viii.; a fair copy in v. In lines 10 and 11 the words "fled" and "thirsty" are his father's corrections (adopted by the author in the fair copy) for "chased" and "sultry."]

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1832

(AT 13 YEARS OF AGE)[1]

SONNET

TO THE MORNING[2]

SEE, where she comes, the mountain mists of night,
  Scarce yet unwreathing their fantastic shapes
  Of pinnacle and tow'r, when morn awakes
Fainter and fainter in confusing flight,
Leave hill and vale, all wrapt in rosy light.
  She comes: she looks upon the silent lakes;
  The last long-lingering cloud the hill forsakes.
Far in the clear blue sky that heaves his height,
The choral choirs that people every tree
  Join with the music of the stream, that plays[3]
Adown the mountain side with jocund glee.
  There is a simple softness in those lays
That wakes the heart of man to piety,
  To hymn his Father's, his Creator's praise.

[*Feb. 5.*]

[1] [This was a lean year in Ruskin's poetical production; perhaps because he was sticking to his lessons (there are some Latin verses of this date among his MSS.); perhaps also because he employed more of his leisure in drawing. It was on his thirteenth birthday that his father's partner, Mr. Telford, gave the boy a copy of Rogers' *Italy*; he had no sooner cast eye on Turner's vignettes than he set himself "to imitate them as far as I possibly could by fine pen shading" (*Præterita*, i. ch. iv. § 87). The summer holiday of the year was spent at Sevenoaks and Dover. On returning home he wrote "The Grave of a Poet," on hearing of Scott's death. The unpublished pieces of this year are few and short.]

[2] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 105. In MS. Book viii., fair-copied into v.]

[3] [So in both the MSS. of the poem; "plays" was misprinted "flows" in the ed. of 1891.]

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THE SONG OF THE SOUTHERN BREEZE[1]

Oh, what is the voice of the wind that flies
All by the waste and wintry skies?
What is the voice of the breeze that swells
Down by the darksome and dreary dells?
Where has it been,
And what has it seen,
As it sailed, the high crest of the billows between?
Sweeping the heather that girdles the mountain,
And circling the waves as they foam in the fountain.
For the tempest-child
It singeth so wild
'Mongst the hills that are heavenward piled;—
"Lullaby, lullaby!"
Has it sung above the wave;—
"Lullaby, lullaby!"
O'er the sailor's ocean-grave.
Where hast thou been
By the ocean green?
Tell me, wild wind, what thou hast seen?

Breeze

I have come from the southern land,
All by India's pearly strand;
And the spicy gales they were following me,
As I swept across the boundless sea.
I have raised the flag of the war-ship's mast,
As it hung down lazilie;
I have sung my song with the midnight blast,
With a mournful melodie.
Oh, I have gone so fleet and fast,
By the rocks of the sounding sea;
And the waves, they smiled as I by them past,
And they smiled with their foam on me.
I have fanned the skies of Araby,
Across the lonely sand;

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 106–108, where line 9 reads "on" for "in the fountain," and line 19 reads "Tell me, wild wind, where thou hast been." The poem is first given, with its title, in MS. Book viii., and fair-copied, without any title, into Book v.]

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And I have seen the pilgrim die
In a far and foreign land.
I've seen full many a mountain-height
Uprear his giant form of might;
And I have flown
O'er[1] the desert lone,
By Chimborazo's mountain-throne.
I have borne the red bolt on my breast,
As it fiercely crackled by;
I have lulled the ocean into rest,
With my soft and soothing sigh.
I have caught the clouds from the golden west
Where the sun delights to die;
And I've been by the crags of the mountain's crest,
That reareth himself on high.
E'en now there's a cloud that is waiting for me,
To carry him over the northern sea.
I must away—
Over the ocean away,—
Full far and full far I must urge my flight;
Ere that day shall be drowned in the mists of the night,
I am gone by the crests of foam and snow
That hide the waters' depth below,
Away, and away!

February 12.

[1] [The fair copy (MS. Book v.) miswrites "By."]

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[THE DESTRUCTION OF PHARAOH][1]

Mourn, Mizraim, mourn! The weltering wave
Wails loudly o'er Egyptia's brave
  Where, lowly laid, they sleep;
The salt sea rusts the helmet's crest;
The warrior takes his ocean-rest,
  Full far below the deep.
—The deep, the deep, the dreary deep!
—Wail, wail, Egyptia! mourn and weep!
For many a mighty legion fell
Before the God of Israël.

Wake, Israel, wake the harp. The roar
Of ocean's wave on Mizraim's shore
  Rolls now o'er many a crest.
Where, now, the iron chariot's sweep?
Where Pharaoh's host? Beneath the deep
  His armies take their rest.
Shout, Israel! Let the joyful cry
Pour forth the notes of victory;
High let it swell across the sea,
For Jacob's weary tribes are free!

[*About March.*]

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 109. From MS. Book viii. "After writing 'The Site of Babylon' on November 6 (1831), he began 'The Repentance of Nineveh'; but gave that up for 'The Destruction of Pharaoh'; the first attempt at which was a failure, and was dropped for a translation from Anacreon, whom he was reading with Dr. Andrews at the time (*Præterita*, i. ch. iv. § 81). Then, after 'The Southern Breeze,' occurs 'Mourn, Mizraim, mourn,' not dated, but earlier than the Birthday Address of the year. It is worth while precising the date of so fine a fragment."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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[THE GRAVE OF THE POET

WRITTEN ON HEARING OF THE DEATH OF SIR WALTER SCOTT][1]

THE grass grows green on the banks of Tweed,
The river rolls clear over pebble and weed;
The wave is bright, and the foam is light,
All in the eddies gurgling white.
Shall the grass grow green on the banks of Tweed
When the grave has seized its Lord?
Shall the river roll clear over pebble and weed
When he lies 'neath the cold green-sward?
Heavily lieth the sod on his breast,
Low is his pillow and long his rest;
Cold on his grave may the moonbeam shiver,—
The soul of the minstrel is parted for ever!
Doth he lie on the mountain heath
Where the tempest sings his dirge of death?
Or is his shroud
The misty cloud,
Clothing the cliffs that are rising proud?
Meet were a grave so waste and wild,
Meet for the grave of a mountain child!
Shall the cloistered pile receive him,
Where the ivy round is weaving?
Where shall he be laid?
Where his last sad requiem said?
For the ivy's enwreathing
The harp and the chord,
And the worm is entwining
The brow of the bard.[2]

September.

[1] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 110–111. From MS. Book viii.]
[2] [Scott died at Abbotsford on September 21, 1832. He was buried at Dryburgh Abbey on September 26.]

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1833

(AT 14 YEARS OF AGE)[1]

MY FATHER'S BIRTHDAY[2]

THE month of May, the month of May,
I love it for its jocund hours;
The merry hours that fly away
As swiftly as its flowers.
I love it for the laugh so light
It throws o'er all the face of nature,
A something gladdening and bright
That glistens on her every feature.
I see it where the grass grows green
On daisied mead, by sparkling stream;
I hear it in the roundelay
The birds pour forth at dawn of day.

The brook that to and fro meanders
Bears gladness in its crystal springs;
There's gladness in the wind that wanders
Among the hawthorn-blossomings.
But doubly pure each glancing stream,
More gaily decked each tree,[3]
And brighter every noontide beam,
And lovelier to me,—

[1] [1833 was an important year in Ruskin's early life, as already explained (Vol. I. p. xxix.), on account of his first considerable tour on the Continent. This tour is the motive of his chief poetical exercise of the year. The song, "I weary for the torrent leaping," has already been given among the poems collected in 1850, above, p. 3. There are only three other pieces besides that and the one here given. One is a story of a Brownie and a Kelpie, located on Louter Fell; the others are fragments only.]

[2] [First printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 117–118. A draft of the verses is in MS. Book viii.; a fair copy, made for presentation on the day, in Book ia.]

[3] [The author's corrections of this line and the preceding may be given as an example of the trouble he took with many of his pieces. Before he settled on "doubly pure" he tried "doubly bright" and "purer seems," and "glancing" was substituted for "sparkling." "More gaily decked tree" was substituted for "and greener every

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More deeply blue thy sky above,—
More soft each songster's lay of love,—
For in thy blooming month, fair May,
I hail my father's natal day!

10*th May*.

tree," and "more verdant every tree," successively. In the draft the last eight lines ran :—

"And still I love by sea and shore,
I love the month of May;
But what I love it for still more,
My father's natal day.
Oh, may the months come bring him health,
And every year increasing wealth,
Then shall I still have cause to say,
Oh, how I love the month of May."]

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1833–34

(AT 14–15 YEARS OF AGE)

ACCOUNT OF A TOUR ON THE CONTINENT[1]

[1] [First printed (with some omissions, specified in later notes) in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 119–163. For an account of the planning of this tour, see *Præterita*, i. ch. iv. § 88; for the route and description of the tour, *ibid.* ch. vi. "It had excited all the poor little faculties that were in me," says Ruskin, "to their utmost strain. . . . The winter of '33, and what time I could steal to amuse myself in, out of '34, were spent in composing, writing fair, and drawing vignettes for the decoration of the . . . poetical account of our tour, in imitation of Rogers' *Italy*" (*ibid.* ch. iv. §§ 90, 91). It should be noted that the account of the tour in *Præterita* does not give the route quite accurately. They went by Calais (May 11), Cassel, Lille, Tournay and Brussels, Namur, Liège, Spa, and Aix-la-Chapelle to Cologne. Then, up the Rhine, to Heidelberg and on to Strassburg. Thence through the Black Forest to Schaffhausen; by Constance to Coire; across the Splügen to Como, Milan, Lago Maggiore, Geneva, Turin, Great St. Bernard, Vevey, Interlaken, Chamouni; returning by Paris, they reached Herne Hill on September 21. The poems were not all written in 1833, nor in the order of places visited. In the author's MSS. prose passages were occasionally interspersed. They were not given in the ed. of 1891, but are here included in their proper places. They are often of considerable interest, as giving Ruskin's first attempt to describe in prose places and scenes which were to become prominent in his later works.

The MS. sources from which the "Tour," as here printed, is made up are four in number: (1) In MS. Book ix. there is a fair copy (prose and verse), in a good "copperplate" hand, and with drawings inserted. This illustrated edition stops at the beginning of the prose passage on "Heidelberg" (see note on p. 364). It is with reference to this that Ruskin says in *Præterita*: "The drawings were made on separate pieces of paper and pasted into the books; many have since been taken out, others are there for which the verses were never written, for I had spent my fervour before I got up the Rhine. I leave the unfinished folly in Joanna's care, that none but friends may see it." In publishing the "Tour" in 1891 with Ruskin's consent, the editor explained that he understood the "folly" to refer "not to the literary quality of the verse, but to the miscalculation and miscarriage of an ambitious project; for, as I find from a list at the end of No. viii., he had intended this volume to contain about 150 pieces of prose and poetry, and at least as many drawings! And in saying he did not follow his tour beyond the Rhine, Mr. Ruskin refers only to this volume, No. ix. I am pretty certain that he was not aware of the amount of material existing in rough copies at the back of his book-shelves."—(*Editor's Note*, 1891.) A note of the various drawings as they occur is added in this edition. In this MS. (ix.) the verse is rarely punctuated, the prose always is. (2) In MS. Book viii. there is a rough copy of almost all the prose and verse of the tour (see note on p. 533). (3) In addition to the rough copy of the greater part already mentioned, there is in a third Note-book (vii.) the only copy (in a female hand—perhaps that of his cousin, Mary Richardson) of the verses on "The Rhine" and "Chamouni" (pp. 368, 382). (4) Among various loose MSS. (now Book iA) were "Calais" (prose and verse), and the verses on "Cassel," "Lille," "Brussels," "The Meuse," "Andernach," and "St. Goar," as well as the verses on "Milan" and "Passing the Alps," which occur only in this MS. The prose passage on Chamouni (see p. 380) is in MS. Book xi.

The text in this edition is printed from the fair copy (No. 1 above), so far as that extends. The most interesting of the variations are given in footnotes.]

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CALAIS[1]

THE sands are in the sunlight sleeping,
The ocean barrier is beating;[2]
Again, again for evermore
Haste the light curlings to the shore,
That from the sands the impression sweep
Of playful Childhood's daring feet,
That seeks within its sandy cell
The pebble bright, or purple shell.
Far in its clear expanse, lay wide
Unruffledly that ocean-tide,
Stretching away where paler grew
The heaven's bright unclouded blue.
And, far away in distance dying,
Old England's cliffy coast was lying;
And beautiful as summer cloud
By the low sun empurpled proud.

Strange, that a space from shore to shore
So soon, so easily passed o'er,
Should yet a wide distinction place
'Twixt man and man, 'twixt race and race!
Sudden and marked the change you find,—
Religion, language, even mind;
That you might think that narrow span
Marked the varieties of man.[3]

How much has been said of Calais.[4] Every one who has ever set his foot on the French shore, from poor Yorick to the veriest scribbler ever blotted paper, has written half a volume upon Calais. And no marvel. Calais—the busy—the bustling, the—I had almost said the beautiful, for beautiful it was to me, and I believe to every one who enters it as a vestibule—an introduction to France, and to the French. See Calais, and you can see no more, though you should perambulate France from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. It is a little France, a miniature

[1] [Here, in the fair copy (ix.), is a sketch of calm sea at low tide, with sailing-boat and fishermen.]

[2] [So both in the rough and in the fair copy. The editor of the 1891 edition of the *Poems* thought that the text "must be a mistranscription of an insufficiently altered rough copy now lost, as the reading is neither rhyme nor reason," and changed the line to "[The tide upon the bar is leaping];" but the young author, as we have seen in the case of the "Iteriad," was not always careful to get a true rhyme, and the meaning is clear enough. In lines 5 and 6, above, his father's copy (MS. Book iA) has: "And yet advance and yet retreat On playful Childhood's daring feet;" but this (followed by the ed. of 1891) is corrected by Ruskin to the version in the text, which is also given in his own fair copy.]

[3] [Here is a sketch of two old fishermen on the shore, of whom one is looking over the sea through a telescope.]

[4] [The prose is preceded by a sketch of the sea with a wooden pier and a ship sailing in.]

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picture, but not the less a resemblance. Stand on the pier and look round you. The sky is a French sky, it is a very turquoise, the sea is a French sea in everything but its want of motion, the air is French air, none of your English boisterous sea puffs that blow the dust in your eyes when you wish to be particularly clear sighted. No, it is a mere breath, you can't call it a breeze, yet bearing a delicious, a balmy coolness, and a little, a very little smell of the sea. Look at the fishing boats, they are peculiarly French, and particularly clumsy. The red, tattered, shapeless sail, the undistinguishable resemblance of stem to stern, the porpoise like manner in which the vessel labours through the water, the incorrigible disorder that reigns on board, the confusion of fish out of water with men—that are at least out of their element, would mark a French fishing-boat whatever quarter of the world it might happen to be driven to.

And look at the town; the chimneys are entirely vapourless, and have that peculiarly awkward look incident to all useless things. And look at the people; the countenance, the costume, the *tout ensemble* is altogether different from anything you ever saw in England, and yet England's cliffs are on the horizon, half-an-hours'[1] might see you beneath them. It is most extraordinary.[2]

CASSEL[3]

The way was long, and yet 'twas sweet,—
Through many a shady, soft retreat,
Where the broad willow semblance gave
Of weeping beauty to the wave;
And elm, with massy foliage prest,
And feathery aspen's quivering crest;
And many a spiry poplar glade,
And hazel's rich entangled shade:
While, onward as advancing still
From Omer's[4] plain to Cassel's hill,
Far—yet more far the landscape threw
Its deep, immeasurable blue.
Oh, beautiful those plains were showing,
Where summer sun was hotly glowing!
Many a battlefield lay spread—
Once the dark dwelling of the dead:

[1] [So the fair copy. The version in IA has more accurately "four hours."]

[2] [Sketch of Calais Square, or market-place, with two figures—a man and woman, and a child (? J.J.R., M.R., and J.R.)—evidently British, at whom a Frenchman, who is wheeling a barrow near them, looks in amazement. The child has its hands uplifted in wonder, and is looking at the quaint buildings. With the above passages in prose and verse, cf. *The Poetry of Architecture*, § 16.]

[3] [Sketch of trees in the foreground on either side, and a town with three windmills in the distance.]

[4] ["Omer=St Omer, where is the Seminary, which suggests the religious procession."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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But fruitful now their champaigns wave
With bending grain on soldier's grave.
While far beneath in long array
The priestly orders wound their way;
Heavy the massive banners rolled,
Rich wrought with gems, and stiff with gold:
While, as the cross came borne on high
Beneath its crimson canopy,
Many the haughty head that bowed,—
Sunk his high crest the warrior proud,
The priest his glance benignant cast,
And murmured blessings as he past;
While, round the hillside echoing free,
Rung the loud hymning melody.
Many a monkish voice was there,—
Many a trumpet rent the air,—
And softer, sweeter, yet the same,
The sounds in failing cadence came.
No marvel that the pomp and pride
Of Rome's religion thus should hide
The serpent-folds beneath that robe,
The poison mantling in the bowl.[1]

When shall we get up this hill, this interminable hill?[2] Bend after bend we have been ascending for the last half-hour, every successive turn disclosing a weary length of way, and those tiresome windmills at the top seem as far from us as ever. Windmills have long been celebrated for gesticulation, celebrated with Cervantes all over the world,[3] but never saw I windmills more provokingly alive than at present, with their long stretchy arms bending to the breeze that flew over the hilltop; they seemed beckoning us up ironically, while the slow measured step of our booted postillion, as he tramped it up the hill as much encumbered as a cat with walnut shells, told us of many a weary moment ere those becks should, could, or would be obeyed. We are on the summit, a green plateau of turf, that looks round on the wide plains of France without a single eminence to rival it, and few that can obstruct its view.—Fifteen battle-fields are in view from that spot, telling a fearful tale of the ready ire of nations, yet looking as green and peaceful as if they had never been watered with blood. They say the cliffs of England are visible from Cassel—the sea certainly is, so I looked in the direction and I did see

[1] [These four lines of "rabid Protestantism" (*Seven Lamps*, 1880, Pref.) were omitted in the ed. of 1891. They are followed in the original by a sketch of a bishop beneath a canopy, with other figures.]

[2] [The prose passage is headed in the original by a sketch of two windmills on an eminence, overlooking a wide plain.]

[3] [*Don Quixote* was a favourite book with Ruskin's father, who used to read it aloud to his son (*Præterita*, i. ch. iii. § 68.]

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something. I had some lurking suspicions it was a cloud, but I chose to believe it was my own England, and it did quite as well to bid farewell to.

I love a view like this, for it seems as if you were looking over all the wide, wide world and were ruling it. Throughout all our after journey I have seen nothing more beautiful or more wonderful of its kind than the view from the little, humble, neglected village of—Cassel.[1]

LILLE[2]

Oh, red the blushing east awoke,
And bright the morn on Cassel broke;
Along the green hillside we flew;
Flashed the clear sunshine in the dew
That on the clustering herbage hung,—
That to the tangled copse-wood clung,—
That shot like stars through every shade,
And glanced on every wildwood glade.
At length, by many a wind descending
That ever to the plain were bending
Farther, and farther still, we pressed
From Cassel's insulated crest,
That, back retiring, fainter still
Showed the rich outlines of its hill,
And faded in the purple haze
That spoke the coming noontide blaze.
That noontide blaze delayed not long;
On Tournay's tow'rs 'twas fierce and strong,
And, ere we gained the middle way,
The glow was like an Afric day.
Full upon Lille's high ramparts round,
On massive wall and moated mound,
Shot the fierce sun his glaring ray,
As bent we on our burning way:
Till past the narrow drawbridge length—
The massive gates' portcullised strength,
And moat, whose waves found steepy shore
Where forward high[3] the bastion bore;
And where the sentinels were set
High on the dizzy parapet:

[1] [Sketch of a street with quaint architecture—in the foreground market women.]
[2] [Here is a sketch of a street, with waggon and horses in the foreground.]
[3] ["Huge" in the ed. of 1891 is a variant in ia discarded by the fair copy.]

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Till the last portals echoes woke,
And Lille upon us sudden broke,
Giving to view another scene,
So clear, so noble, so serene,
'Twould seem enchantment's varied hue
On palace, street, and avenue.
Those ancient piles rose huge and high
In rich irregularity;
Colossal form and figure fair
Seemed moving, breathing, living there.
The vaulted arch, where sunlight pure
Might never pierce the deep obscure,—
Where broadly barred, the ancient door
Was with such carving imaged o'er,—
The bending Gothic gable-roof
Of past magnificence gave proof;
The modern window's formal square
With Saxon arch was mingled there,[1]
Whose stern recesses, dark and deep,
The figured iron stanchions keep.[2]

Passeport, monsieur, s'il vous plait. I hate fortified towns, in general, that is.—Their houses are like barracks, their public buildings like prisons, their population like so many rats in a rat trap; they are arduous to get in (*sic*), difficult to get out, and disagreeable to remain in. To all this, however, Lille is an exception, except in one circumstance—its difficulty of access. We were detained after a long day's journey under a burning sun, hot, hungry, and stupid, while our passport was examined. Slowly the sentinel unfolded the paper, spelled over its contents with tiresome coolness and provoking minuteness, slowly returned it, and then came—*Passez.* And pass we did right gladly. Lille is a beautiful, a most beautiful town. I have seen none equal to it, for grandeur of effect, for the massive magnificence of its edifices, for the palace like nobility of its streets, except Genoa. The day also on which we entered it was almost Italian, the sky was of such a deep and unbroken blue, and a stream of rich, glowing, tawny light shot upon the full fretwork and elaborate carving of the upper parts of the houses; but their bases, owing to the narrowness of the streets and the enormous height of the opposing buildings, were wrapt in shade, deep, gloomily deep, when contrasted with the flood of sunshine that glanced on the gable roofs, and almost gave to life[3] the many statues of the Virgin, that stood beneath their Gothic niches, really very respectably sculptured, at every angle of the streets.

[1] ["The '*Saxon* arch' betrays the student, till then, of architecture exclusively English."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]
[2] [Here is a sketch from inside the walls of a fortified town, with cannon.]
[3] [So in the MS., for "gave life to."]

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those hard, unyielding, provokingly smooth flagstones, or to go thundering down, his rapidity increasing every instant, when he is once in for it, lurching tremendously like a ship in a swell, jerk, jerk, jerking—*Oh, facilis descensus Averni, sed, sed;*—Ay, there's the rub. The Hôtel de Bellevue at Brussels ought to have a *belle vue*, for you might as well scale the crags of Gibraltar as storm the heights of the Hôtel de Bellevue; whence, for all the boast of its title, I never could discover more *belle vue* than a dusty square, some formal houses, and a few murky park trees.

We left Brussels on Wednesday morning for Waterloo; the sun beamed sweetly among the long trunks of the aged trees of the forest of Soigny; and their damp bark glistened dewily,—as it rose up taller and taller, branching off into the bending boughs, and slender spray, with the delicate foliage scattered through: here every leaf defined separately and clearly as you looked up to the broad sky; there in light, spready masses, partially concealing the long tapery trunks which retired back, farther and still farther, yet distinctly grouped, and those groups separated by the gleamy stream of yellow sunshine, which shone full on the sides of the swelling green grassy banks, then broken by the intervening hollows, then climbing again up the dewy moss and white trunks. It was exceeding beautiful; I could have fancied the glister of the bright bayonets changing, like starlight on a wavy ocean, among the retiring foliage of those ancient trees—I forgot how many long years had past by since that eventful day.

This is the field of Waterloo. The round hills of green pasture lay unbroken before me, without a single tree, except where, far to the right, the rich forest country commenced again, breaking away in rounded masses, till lost in the blue of the faint horizon. All is peace now. Englishmen may feel proud on the field of Waterloo—perhaps I did; but there is something mingled with it—Poor Napoleon! The grass is very green on the field of Waterloo—it has grown from the dust of our bravest. Oh, tread on it softly!

THE MEUSE

The sky was clear, the morn was gay
In promise of a cloudless day.
Fresh flew the breeze, with whose light wing
Aspen and oak were quivering:
From flow'ret dank it dashed the dew,—
The harebell bent its blossom blue,—
And from the Meuse the mist-wreaths grey
That morning breeze had swept away,
Showing such scenes as well might seem
The fairy vision of a dream.
For changing still, and still as fair
Rock, wave, and wood were mingled there;
Peak over peak, fantastic ever,
The lofty crags deep chasms sever:

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And, grey and gaunt, their lichened head
Rose sheerly from the river's bed,
Whose mantling wave, in foamy sheet,
Their stern, projecting bases beat;
And, lashed to fury in his pride,
In circling whirlpools swept the tide,
As threatening, on some future day,
Those mighty rocks to tear away,—
What though their front should seem to be
A barrier to eternity!
And on its side, the cliffs between,
Were mazy forests ever seen,
That the tall cliff's steep flanks so grey
Were clothed in mantle green and gay.
Long time along that dell so deep,
Beside the river's bed we sweep;
So steep the mighty crests inclined,
None other pathway you might find;
Till the tall cliff's gigantic grace
To undulating hills gave place,
And vineyards clothe the bending brow,
'Stead of the clinging copsewood now.[1]

How lightly the waves of the broad Meuse crisped with the first breath of the morning, as we swept over the long bridge that crosses the river from Namur, and looked back on the rich dome of its small but beautiful cathedral, as it began to smile to the first glance of the joyous sun, that was drinking up the delicate mists which clung to the hills, and rested on the valley, in which the fair city reposed so peacefully—and then we dashed along the valley of the Meuse. I know not if it was because this was our first initiation in to the scenery of Continental rivers, but this part of the Meuse appeared to me infinitely preferable (not in point of sublimity or beauty, but in that romantic and picturesque fairy beauty which is, in many cases, superior to either) to anything which I ever afterwards saw on the shores of the far famed Rhine.

There was, to me, a great sameness throughout the whole of the course of the latter river; and, for its fortresses, it is positively too much of a good thing—a tiresome repetition of ruins, and ruins too which do not altogether agree with my idea of what ruins ought to be. But for the Meuse—the infinite variety of scenery, the impossibility of seeing every successive change as you feel that it ought to be seen—and, finally, the tantalizing rate at which you dash away from that which you could feast upon, and look upon, and dwell upon, for—ages, I was going to say, months, I will say, are enough to enchant you with anything. If you

[1] [Here is a sketch of a calm, broad river: on one side, a rocky road; on the other, crags.]

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wish to see rock scenery in perfection, go to the Meuse,[1] for never were rocks more beautifully disposed, more richly and delicately wooded, or more finely contrasted with the amazing richness of the surrounding scenery. But, alas! it was but a forenoon ride, and the eve saw us quit the magnificent Meuse with sorrow, for the smoky streets and coal wharfs of Liège, and the round, dumpy, shapeless hills of Spa.[2]

AIX-LA-CHAPELLE

Hast ever heard of the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, reader? If thou ever travellest from Spa to Aix, or from Aix to Cologne, thou shalt find various treaties of peace have been entered into, and ratified, which thou wilt not approve of. Thou shalt find a treaty whereof the first condition is that the postillion's whip be not closely acquainted with the back of his quadrupeds more than two or three times in a stage, or so.

Item. That the above mentioned quadrupeds be not compelled to draw any carriage, chariot, gig, or other vehicle whatsoever at a greater rate than two miles an hour.

Item. That the above-mentioned quadrupeds be not compelled to trot upon the paved centre of the road, but that they be permitted to draw the carriage, chariot, gig, or other vehicle into the beds of sand and dust, denominated by the postillion "la terre," even although the carriage, chariot, gig, or other vehicle be in imminent danger of being overset into the ditch, which commonly bordereth upon the road.

Item. That the postillion be permitted, when upon the back of his horse, to indulge himself with a comfortable pipe, and half hour's nap or so, during which time his above-mentioned quadrupeds be surrendered to their own will, guidance, and management.

Alas! every article of this treaty was strictly fulfilled with regard to us, and the consequence was, that in a six hours' ride of twelve miles, I was first fevered by the sun, then smothered by the dust, and finally was—but let that pass for the present.

A cathedral is a noble, a beautiful, a sublime thing, by twilight, with its white fretted marble columns looking out from the dark retiring immensity of the long aisles, and the faint streams of coloured and variegated light falling faintly through the Gothic windows, streaming at intervals along the chequered floors, or ruddily lighting up the countenances of the marble figures, giving a ghastly resemblance to reality, a mockery of life, that makes you start when you look upon the hollow eyes and rigid muscles starting out of the stone. You almost think that the dead forms of departed monarchs have sprung forth from their narrow dwellings

[1] [Ruskin thus early fixed on characteristics of Meuse scenery which he afterwards enforced. See especially *Letters to William Ward* (letter of Sept. 8, 1867), whom he sent in that year for a sketching tour on the Meuse, in company with Mr. George Allen.]

[2] [Facing the end of this passage is a full-page illustration of a courtyard, with a pillared corridor, steps, etc. Then comes another nearly full-page one of a large Continental church, and then the following prose piece on Aix-la-Chapelle.]

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beneath that ancient pavement, and that the peers of Charlemagne are rallying again around their monarch.

Saw Charlemagne's easy-chair—arms stone, back stone, hard, independent, unaccommodating granite. Thin velvet cushion, however, on the seat as a mediator. Very ancient affair; product of the dark ages, I suppose. His sarcophagus also, sculptured, Grecian, basso-relievo. The revolutionists amused themselves by depriving the poor stone gentlemen of their olfactory nerves, alias noses; consequence, they look all terrible flats. Night coming on, left the cathedral just in time to be tantalized by grinning at a magnificent picture when it was pitch dark (Last Judgment, Michael Angelo, I think, in the Hôtel de ville).[1] Return'd to the inn in very bad humour. Off early next morning for Cologne. Good-night.

COLOGNE

The noon was past, the sun was low,
Yet still we felt his arid glow;
From the red sand, reflected glare
Deadened the breeze, and fired the air.
The open sky was misty grey;
The clouds in mighty masses lay,
That, heaped on the horizon high,
Marked Alpine outline on the sky.
Long had we toiled to gain a brow
On which we stood triumphant now,[2]
While the white mist was certain sign
Where took his course the mighty Rhine.
Hills in the distant haze were seen,
And wide expanse of plain between,
Whose desert length, without a tree,
Was stretched in vast monotony.
We drove adown that hill amain;
We past along the shadeless plain;
Rested we now where, uncontrolled,
The Rhine his bursting billows rolled;
And ever, ever, fierce and free
Bore broadly onward to the sea.[3]

And this is the birthplace of Rubens! Sink these French bad roads. A long day's journey over them under a burning sun, together with a perambulation on a damp evening at Aix-la-Chapelle so knocked me up that I was forced to diet and quiet it, and could not stir out to see Rubens' last picture, the masterpiece of the master, the Crucifixion of

[1] [Ruskin was here mistaken. There is no picture by Michael Angelo at Aix-la-Chapelle.]

[2] [Two lines following are completely erased in the MS.]

[3] [Here is a sketch of Cologne: the Rhine, bridge, and unfinished cathedral in the distance; in the foreground to the left, tower and shipping.]

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St. Peter, bequeathed by him at his death to his native city, and, yet more, his birth-chamber.[1]

There is in many, in most, of the pictures of Rubens, and that even in his most sacred subjects, magnificent as they are viewed as paintings only, an unholiness, a cast of Bacchanalian revelry, to say the least, an unpleasingness, that does him dishonour. But there are a few, a chosen few, of his pictures which the master hath poured his whole soul into, and the production of one of which were enough to repay a lifetime of labour with immortality. There is a picture, I neither know where it is, nor what it is, but there is a picture curtained up in one of the royal palaces of France, the St. Ambrosius, I think, kneeling before a crucifix. There is one single ray of yellow light falling faintly upon the grey hairs and holy features of the venerable saint, the rest is in obscurity; there is nothing more, nothing to disturb either the eye or the mind, and you feel calmed and subdued when you look upon that one solitary figure, as if in the presence of a superior being. It is impossible to see that picture, the reality is too striking, and a reality so hallowed and so beautiful, that when the curtain is again drawn over the picture, you feel as if awaking from a dream of heaven. It is by such pictures as this that Rubens has gained his immortality; and it was, I believe, such a picture as this that I did not see at Cologne. Then the disappointment made me worse, and I could not stir out to see the room in which he was born. But it don't signify talking. Reader, beware of the Grosser Rheinberg hotel at Cologne.[2] Art thou a poet, a painter, or a romancer? Imagine the Rhine, the beautiful, the mighty, the celebrated Rhine, fouler than the Thames at London Bridge, compressed into almost as narrow a channel, washing dirty coal wharfs on the one side; bogs, marshes, and coke manufactories on the other, yellow with mud from beneath, black with tar and coal-dust from above, loaded with clumsy barges and dirty shipping; in short, a vile, sordid, mercenary river, fit only for traffic, high Germans and low Dutchmen, and you will have some idea of the Rhine, as seen from the bedroom windows of the Grosser Rheinberg. Oh, if thou wouldest see the Rhine as it may be seen, as it ought to be seen, shut your eyes, sleep your time away, do anything but look about you, till you get to Bonn, then walk

[1] [Ruskin was in error in supposing Cologne to be the birthplace of Rubens. He was born at Siegen. The claim of Cologne is kept alive by the showing of a house (No. 10 Sternengasse) as that in which the master was born. The picture referred to by Ruskin as his masterpiece is the Crucifixion of St. Peter, over the high altar of the Church of St. Peter. "It was," says Sir Joshua Reynolds, "painted a little time before Rubens's death. . . . Rubens in his letters to Geldorp expresses his own approbation of this picture, which he says was the best he ever painted. . . . Many parts are so feebly drawn, and with so tame a pencil, that I cannot help suspecting that Rubens died before he had completed it, and that it was finished by some of his scholars. . . . We went from Düsseldorf to Cologne on purpose to see it; but it by no means recompensed us for our journey" ("A Journey to Flanders and Holland," in *The Complete Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1824, ii. 290).]

[2] [This hotel, no longer extant, seems to have had a poor reputation. "Conveniently placed on the water's edge and close to the steamers," says the first edition of Murray's *Handbook for Travellers on the Continent*, "but deficient in comfort and badly managed."]

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out upon the terrace which looks forth over the swell of the deep waters to the dim outline of the seven mountains, and there gaze and dream and meditate. Secondly, Art thou an epicure? Imagine mutton-chops which ought to have been tough, but which age had made tender, accompanied by circular cakes of congealed fat, denominated gravy, together with a kind of brown ashes, apparently moistened with whale oil (which, I think, they called fried potatoes), as an addition to your feast, and you have an idea of a dinner of the Grosser Rheinberg. I have omitted one thing, however, which was really capital—the vinegar. They called it Hock wine, certainly, but that don't signify; you must not be led astray by names in this part of the world. However, good vinegar would not make up for the want, or worse than want, of everything else; and although the waiters made a point of not appearing until the bell had been rung seven times, we at last made them understand that we neither liked their mode of waiting, nor the contents of their larder, and so, according to their deserts, deserted them.

The cathedral is the richest in fretwork and carving, in the delicate finish of every shaft, and buttress, and pinnacle, that I saw on the journey, except Milan. They showed us, in a little Gothic chapel, three skulls, which they told us were those of the Magi. They were set in framework of gold, and covered with jewels, but the pomp became not the dry bones. The soul-less eye and fleshless cheek looked not the less horrible though a diamond beamed through the one and a bar of gold bound the other.[1] Returned home, and the next morning departed from Cologne with regret, to trace the mighty Rhine to his source among the Rhetian Alps.

ANDERNACHT[2]

Twilight's mists are gathering grey
Round us on our winding way;
Yet the mountain's purple crest
Reflects the glories of the west.
Rushing on with giant force
Rolls the Rhine his glorious course;
Flashing, now, with flamy red,
O'er his jagg'd basaltic bed;
Now, with current calm and wide,
Sweeping round the mountain's side;
Ever noble, proud, and free,
Flowing in his majesty.

[1] [*Cf.* § 64 of *The Poetry of Architecture*, in Vol. I. p. 56.]

[2] [This section, and that on St. Goar (p. 359), were first printed in *Friendship's Offering*, 1835, pp. 317–318, under the title of "Fragments from a Metrical Journal," signed and dated "1833, J. R." They were not included in the *Poems*, 1850. In the American edition of *Poems by John Ruskin*, they occupy pp. 4–5. Both in *Friendship's Offering* and in the original MS. "Andernach" (the Roman *Antunnacum*) is misspelt "Andernacht." The text printed above is that of *Friendship's Offering*. It is so much altered from the original draft that it may be interesting to compare the two

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Soon, upon the evening skies
Andernacht's grim ruins rise;
Buttress, battlement, and tower,
Remnants hoar of Roman power,
Monuments of Cæsar's sway,
Piecemeal mouldering away.
Lo, together loosely thrown,
Sculptured head and lettered stone;
Guardless now the arch-way steep[1]
To rampart huge and frowning keep;
The empty moat is gay with flowers,
The night-wind whistles through the towers,
And, flapping in the silent air,
The owl and bat are tenants there.[2]

What is it that makes the very heart leap within you at the sight of a hill's blue outline; that so ætherializes the soul and ennobles the spirit; that so raises you from the earth and from aught of the earth? Is it their apparent proximity to the blue heaven's inaccessibleness? is it the humbling sense of your own littleness or the immoveable, unchangeable magnificence of that which has seen the beginning of the world and will see

versions. The following "First Sketch of 'Andernach'" was printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 283:—

We have wound a weary way;
Twilight's mists are gathering grey.
Purple now the hills are showing;
Bright the western clouds are glowing.
Lashing on with giant force,
Rolls the Rhine his sullen course;
Flash his waves with flamy red,
Eddying o'er their basalt bed;—
Now with wide expanded breast,
Now between the hills compressed;
Ever noble, ever free,
Flows his river majesty.
Now upon the evening skies
Andernacht's grey ruins rise,—
Memorials of the Roman power;—
Buttress and battlement and tower,
Decaying, falling fast away,
The monuments of Cæsar's sway,—
In heaps together loosely thrown,—
The sculptured head, inscriptioned stone:
Unguarded now the bridge's length,
And failing fast its arches' strength;
The green sod in the moat is growing,
The cold wind in the chambers blowing,
And, flapping through the thin night air,
The owl and bat, the tenants there.

In the original MS. there is a space left for a drawing before the lines on Andernach.]

[1] ["Steep" was misprinted "keep" in the ed. of 1891.]

[2] [Here follows a sketch of a wooded, high-banked river, with towers and a church in the distance.]

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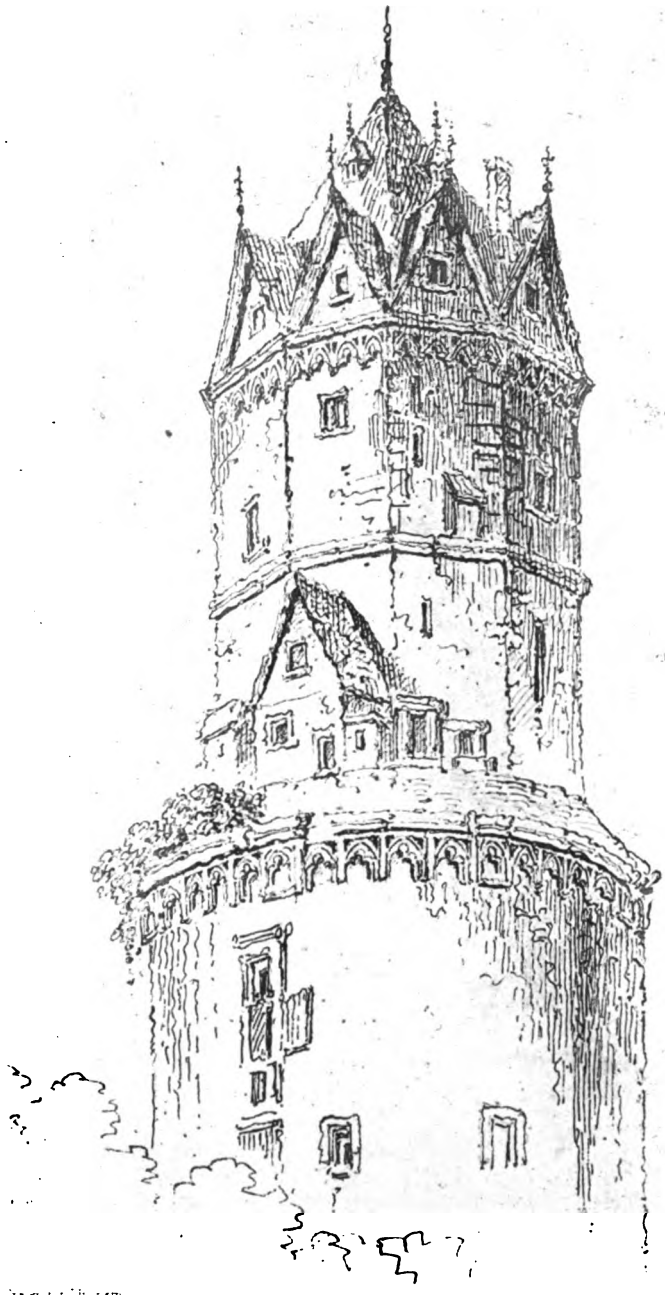

Watch-tower at Andernach.
1833.

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its end, or is it that the thoughts range insensibly from the things created to Him who created them? I know not. How it thrilled through me, when first, far away, across the lake-like swell of the deep waters of that wondrous river, rose the cloudy outline of the blue mountains. Long time hath past over me since I saw the swell of a blue hill. I have longed for them—I have yearned for them as an exile yearns for his native land, and I am with them.

We left Cologne on a misty summer morning, its many turreted spires rising colossally, but grey and faint amid the wreathing columns of mist, which smoked upward from the course of the broad Rhine. There was the huge cathedral, dark with the confused richness of its own fretwork, and the remains of its unfinished but magnificent tower showing ruin-like beside it. There were the red sails and mingled masts of the innumerable shipping, without one sail swelling or a flag bending with the morning breeze. There was that peaceful and lovely lassitude over everything, that sleep of the earth, and the air, and the sky, that charms the mind into a correspondent fascination of stillness, the very thoughts seem sleeping.

We went on, we past Bonn, and Godesberg, and Drachenfels, and sunset was sorrowing over hill and valley when the gloomy and venerable towers of Andernacht beetled over us.

I love to look upon the crags that Cæsar has scaled, and upon the towers that his legions have founded. These are now as they were then, looking up to the broad blue heaven, these are in ruins. Yet they are mighty in their ruin, and majestic in their decay, but their Lords are departed and forgotten as the waves that once lashed their foundations. Other snows have melted, and the Rhine yet rolls onward unbroken, but those waves are lost in the ocean for ever.

EHRENBREITSTEIN [1]

Oh! warmly down the sunbeams fell
Along the broad and fierce Moselle;
And on the distant mountain ridge,
And on the city and the bridge,
So beautiful that stood.
Tall tower and spire, and gloomy port
Were made and shattered in the sport
Of that impetuous flood,
That, on the one side, washed the wall
Of Gothic mansion fair and tall;

[1] [Followed by a sketch of the Rhine with the fortress high on the hill, and the town below. The plate facing the next page is a facsimile of the author's MS. The verses on Ehrenbreitstein were printed in the *Poems*, 1850, pp. 8–12, where they were placed after "The Avalanche," as of "*ætat.* 16," but they were certainly written earlier, as they occur in the rough draft of the "Tour," dated 1833. The text here printed is that of the *Poems*, 1850, which was followed in the ed. of 1891. There are a few minor variations from the MS. in Book ix.]

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And, on the other side, was seen,
Checked by broad meadows rich and green;
And scattering spray that sparkling flew,
And fed the grass with constant dew.
With broader stream and mightier wrath,
The Rhine had chosen bolder path,
All yielding to his forceful will;
Through basalt gorge, and rock ribbed hill,
Still flashed his deep right on.
It checked not at the battled pride,
Where Ehrenbreitstein walled his side;
Stretching across with giant stride,
The mighty waves the rock deride,
And on the crag, like armies, ride;
Flinging the white foam far and wide,
Upon the rough grey stone.
Beneath the sweep[1] of yon dark fell
Join the two brothers; the Moselle,
Greeting the Rhine in friendly guise,
To join his headlong current, flies:
Together down the rivers go,
Resistless o'er their rocky foe,
As lovers, joining hand in hand,
Towards the west, beside their strand
They pass together playfully,
Like allied armies' mingled band:
Toward the east white whirls of sand
The torrent tosses by.

The morning came, and rosy light
Blushed on the bastions and the height,
Where traitor never stood;
And,[2] far beneath in misty night,
The waters wheeled their sullen flight,
Till o'er them far, for many a rood,
The red sun scattered tinge of blood;
Till, broadening into brighter day,
On the rich plain the lustre lay;
And distant spire and village white
Confessed the kiss of dawn,
Amid the forests shining bright
Still multiplying on the sight,
As sunnier grew the morn.

[1] [So the MSS.; the ed. of 1891 reads "brow" for "sweep," and, three lines lower, "To mingle with his current." A little lower down, the fair copy in ix. has, "The rivers pass full playfully," which is, however, corrected to the text in viii. "River" for "torrent" is also read in ix., but corrected in viii.]

[2] [So the fair copy. The draft in MS. Book viii., however, followed in the ed. of 1891, reads "While" for "And," and four lines lower, "Then" for "Till."]

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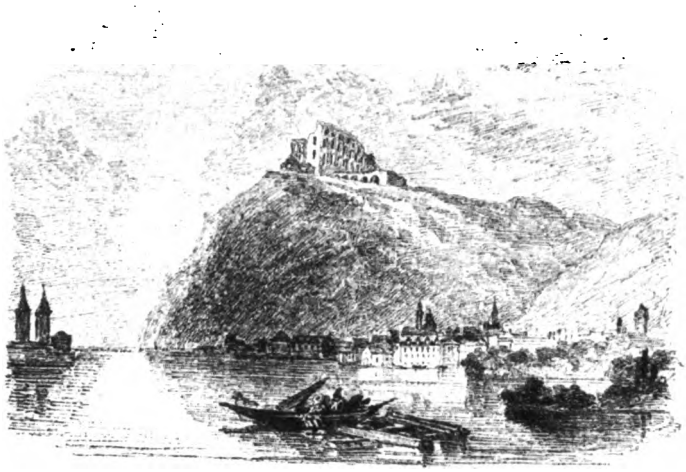

EHRENBREITSTEIN

Oh warmly down the sunbeams fell,
Along the broad and fierce Moselle,
And on the distant mountain ridge,
And on the city, and the bridge,
So beautiful that stood
Tall tower, and spire, or gloomy fort
Were made and shattered in the sport
Of that impetuous flood;
That on the one side, washed the wall,

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We climbed the crag, we scaled the ridge,
On Coblentz looked adown;
The tall red roofs, the long white bridge,
And on the eye-like frown
Of the portals of her palaces,
And on her people's busy press.
There never was a fairer town,
Between two rivers as it lay,
Whence morning mist was curling grey
On the plain's edge beside the hill:—
Oh! it was lying calm and still
In morning's chastened glow:
The multitudes were thronging by,
But we were dizzily on high,
And we might not one murmur hear
Nor whisper, tingling on the ear,
From the far depth below.
The bridge of boats, the bridge of boats—
Across the hot[1] tide how it floats
In one dark bending line!
For other bridge were swept away;—
Such shackle loveth not the play
Of the impetuous Rhine;—
The feeble bridge that bends below
The tread of one weak man,—
It yet can stem the forceful flow,
Which nought unyielding can.
The bar of shingle bends the sea,
The granite cliffs are worn away,
The bending reed can bear the blast,
When English oak were downward cast;
The bridge of boats the Rhine can chain,
Where strength of stone were all in vain.

Oh! fast and faster on the stream
An island driveth down;
The Schwartzwald pine hath shed its green,
But not at autumn's frown;
A sharper winter stript them there,—
The long, straight trunks are bald and bare:—
The peasant, on some Alpine brow,
Hath cut the root and lop't the bough;
The eagle heard the echoing fall,
And soared away to his high eyrie;
The chamois gave his warning call,

[1] [So both MSS.; the ed. of 1891 reads "swift," and nine lines lower, following the draft, reads "stems" for "bends" (in the fair copy).]

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And higher on the mountain tall
Pursued his way unweary.
They come, they come! the long pine floats,—
Unchain the bridge, throw loose the boats,
Lest, by the raft so rudely driven,
The iron bolts be burst and riven!
They come, they come, careering fast,—
The bridge is gained, the bridge is past,—
Before the flashing foam they flee,
Towards the ocean rapidly;
There, firmly bound by builder's care,
The rage of wave and wind to dare,
Or burst of battle-shock to bear,
Upon the boundless sea.[1]

It is said that French will carry you over all Europe, over all civilised Europe at least, and that may be, but it will not carry you over Germany. You might manage with the Grand Turk, but you will not manage with the Germans. Wishing to see the interior of Ehrenbreitstein, we got a young German guide, and crossing to a place where two roads met, considered him to be going the wrong way. There was a poser—how could we stop him? "Nein, nein," we called after him. "Ya," quoth he. "Nein." So he went the way we chose.

After a very hard pull up an abominably cramp[2] hill, we beheld the top of the flagstaff. Here we are all right. No. There was the fortress certainly, but between us and it a ravine nearly a hundred feet deep, walled up the sides so as to form a very unhandsome ditch, and two or three dozen impudent, enormous, open-mouthed guns grinning at us from the battlement. Well, there was nothing for it, so we went back and took the other path.

This time all went right, and we got into the fortress, first, however, prudently stepping up to a sentinel, to ask permission: and he brought an officer upon us. "Do you speak English, sir?" (A stare.) "Français?" (A vibratory motion of the head, and a "Nein.") "Deutsch?" "Ya," and there we stuck. Well, we pulled out our passport, but it was in French, and the officer could not read it. So he looked up and down and at us, and we looked up and down and at him. What was to be done? We bowed and he bowed, and we looked over the battlements and trotted down again, having a very high opinion of the height of German hills, the strength of German walls, the size of German cannon, and the stupidity of all German brains.[3]

[1] [Here is a sketch of a river, swollen and rushing between the hills. Above the prose passage next following a blank space is left for a large drawing to be inserted.]

[2] [A favourite word with Ruskin in his *juvenilia*. He uses it of his own handwriting (Vol. I. p. 455), and of the style of Thucydides (below, p. 395); and here extends it to a contracted, strait, narrow hill. In the "Tour" of 1835 (canto i. stanza 11), he uses it of the statues on Rouen Cathedral (p. 400).]

[3] [Again a space left, for a small drawing.]

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ST. GOAR[1]

Past a rock with frowning front,
Wrinkled by the tempest's brunt,
By the Rhine we downward bore
Upon the village of St. Goar.
Bosomed deep among the hills,
Here old Rhine his current stills,
Loitering the banks between,
As if, enamoured of the scene,
He had forgot his onward way
For a live-long summer day.
Grim the crags through whose dark cleft,
Behind, he hath a passage reft;

[1] [The verses on St. Goar were published, with "Andernacht," in *Friendship's Offering*, 1835, pp. 318–319; not included in the *Poems*, 1850; published in the American edition, pp. 5–6. "With this, as in the case of Andernach, it may be interesting to compare the first draft; if for nothing else, to show that the young poet could polish when he chose, and that he would have eliminated the slipshod grammar and faulty rhymes if he had prepared the rest of his juvenile verses for publication."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. The MS. sent to *Friendship's Offering* is no longer extant; but there is a draft in MS. iA, and a fair copy in ix., which differ very slightly. The latter was printed in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 284–285, as follows :—

FIRST SKETCH OF "ST. GOAR"

We past a rock, whose bare front ever
Had borne the brunt of wind and weather;
And downwards by the Rhine we bore
Upon the village of St. Goar,
That, 'mid the hills embosomed, lay
Where the Rhine checked his onward way,
And lay the mighty crags between;
As if, enamoured of the scene,
He loved not on his way to wind,
And leave a scene so fair behind.
For grim the chasm through whose cleft
The waters had a passage reft;
And gaunt the gorge that yawned before,
Through which, emerging, they must roar.
No marvel they should love to rest,
And peaceful spread their placid breast,
Before in fury driving dread,
Tormented on their rocky bed;
Or flinging far their scattering spray
O'er the peaked rocks, that barred their way,—
Wave upon wave at random tossed
Or in the giddy whirlpool lost,
And now are undisturbed sleeping,—
No more on rocks those billows beating
But, lightly laughing, laps the tide,
Where stoop the vineyards to his side.]

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While, gaunt as gorge of hunted boar,
Dark yawns the foaming pass before,
Where the tormented waters rage,
Like demons in their Stygian cage,
In giddy eddies whirling round
With a sullen choking sound;
Or flinging far the scattering spray,
O'er the peaked rocks that bar his way.
—No marvel that the spell-bound Rhine,
Like giant overcome with wine,
Should *here* relax his angry frown,
And, soothed to slumber, lay him down
Amid the vine-clad banks, that lave
Their tresses in his placid wave.[1]

St. Goar is the least and sweetest place on all the Rhine. There is Godesberg with its hilltop crested with ruins, there is Andernacht with its venerable remains of antiquity, there is Ehrenbreitstein upon whose cliff never traitor stood, looking out far away over its rich sea of champaign, yet there is nothing like St. Goar. It has a lone hill beauty, the little scene around it is exceedingly small, but it has a modest secluded loveliness. You look on Andernacht with veneration, on Ehrenbreitstein with awe, but on St. Goar with love.

There is a voice in all nature. List to the rave of the mad sea; speaks it not eloquently; does it not tell of its green weedy caverns and its coral towers, and the high hills and shelly vallies far, far beneath its cold blue?[2]

[1] [Here follows a sketch of a town in a large plain, with distant mountains. The rough draft of the "Tour" (viii.) contains at this point the following prose passage:—

"It was a wide stretchy sweep of lovely blue champaign, richly cultivated and beautifully wooded, and bounded by magnificent mountain ranges: here fading away, faint and blue and cloudlike toward the south; there distinct and near and lofty, with the green cultivation climbing up their broad flanks. I had read that the snowy summit of the Mont Titlis was visible from Strasburg, the consequence of which marvellous information was, that I metamorphosed every cloud I saw into a mountain, strained my eyes with looking for that which was out of sight, and had at last very nearly argued myself into a conviction that blue hills were white ones, until our entrance into the narrow dell above mentioned precluded all farther observations upon the clouds. A Swiss cottage is a celebrated thing, celebrated far and wide; it has modelled the Tivolian villas of—Highgate and Hampstead, the mock waterfalls and crocodile stools of the Coliseum have extended its fame, and much it delighted me when first the wide projecting wooden roof and carved galleries and external stairs looked out to greet us from among the dark pines. What a host of associations and recollections tumbled in upon me. Mountains, avalanches, glaciers, cottages, Hannibal, vinegar, Tell, Alps, apples, tyrants, and crossbows came crowding into my brain, jumbled together in most admired disorder. I thought of nothing connected the whole day."

With this first impression of a Swiss cottage, cf. *Poetry of Architecture*, § 38, in Vol. I. p. 31. The reference to vinegar is of course to the story told by Livy (xxi. 37) about Hannibal's use of vinegar for blasting operations in his passage of the Alps.]

[2] [MS. viii. adds: "and the skulls of the drowned men that grin from among its rolled, round pebbles."]

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List to the song of the summer breeze; does it not tell of the blue heavens, and the white clouds and other climes, and other seasons, and spicy gales, and myrtle bowers, and sweet things far away? How sweetly the Rhine sings at St. Goar, and it tells of the arched grottoes of the glacier, and the crags of the far Alps, and how it joys to dash against tall rocks once more.

HEIDELBERG

Now from the smiling afternoon
The rain had past away;
And glimmered forth the pallid moon,
Amid the heavens grey.
Brake, and bush, and mead, and flower
Were glistening with the sunny shower;
Where, from the tangled, viny wreath,
The clustered grape looked out beneath,—
Climbing up the southern side
Of the round hills' bosom wide,—
Branches of the chain that bound
All the south horizon round.
Far towards the western day
Mannheim's towers softened lay.—[1]
But a moment:—darkly down
Came the thunder, heaven's frown!
'Mong the trees, a fitful shaking
Told the hoarse night wind was waking.
Grey upon his mountain throne,
Heidelberg his ruins lone
Reared colossally;
All begirt with mighty trees,
Whistling with the even's breeze,
Flapping faintly by.

It was morning:—from the height
Cumbered with its ruins hoar,
All that lovely valley bright
We were looking o'er,

[1] [MS. Book viii. here reads:—

From behind a thunder cloud,
Dark as envy, shot the sun
On those towers high and proud,
Hazily his rays came down
Smiling with those bright rays' kiss,
Shooting round effulgence moony
Like a lovely Oasis
'Mid a desert dark and gloomy.]

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Flashed on him like that sun whose ray,
And all the smile of lightsome day,
He has almost forgotten.[1]

Most beautiful are the paths which scale the face of the hill which is crowned by the castle of Heidelberg, winding beneath the twisted branches of green woods, with here and there a grey crag lifting up its lichened head from the wilderness of brake and grass and flower that concealed the mass of that ancient granite, sometimes supporting a fragment of the remains of the old walls, with here and there an arrow-slit choked up with ivy, then emerging on narrow vallies or steep and rocky dells, or lovely sweeps of dewy green sward, fresh and flowery as ever fairies circled on, and ending on a lofty terrace whose precipice-base was begirt with meadow land, at the point where a narrow mountain gorge opened into the mighty plains of the Rhine, having in its embouchure the little town of Heidelberg, with its river and its tall arched bridge, all glistening under that most lovely of all lights,—the first glow of sunshine, after a spring shower.

The castle of Heidelberg is exceeding desolate. Armies have razed its foundations, the thunder hath riven its towers, and there is no sound in its courts, and the wind is still in the open galleries. The grass is very green on the floor of the hall of the banquet, and the wild birds build their nests in the watch-towers, and they dwell in the dwellings of man, for they are forsaken and left, and there is no voice there—there is no complaining in the dungeon, and where is the voice of gladness in the hall? It is a ruin, a ruin, a desolate ruin. The husbandman sees it on the height of the hills as he looks up from the green valley, and remembers the power of his ancient princes, and knows not if he should grieve that their power is past away. I know not how it is, but all nations in all ages seem to have respected the juice of the fruit of the vine. All has yielded to it from time immemorial. When Marshal Turenne attacked the castle in question,[2] it was but a touch and go. The foundations were blown up, the battlements were knocked down, the towers snapt like so many sticks of barley sugar, the statues decapitated, the carving crashed, the ditches filled, the castle ruined, but the cellars— Walk into them, sir, walk into them; there is not a rat dispossessed or in any manner disturbed.

[1] [In the MS. fair copy (ix.) two pages and a half are here left blank, and then follow the first four and a half lines of the prose passage given above, the rest of which is supplied in the text from the draft in the earlier MS. (viii.). The fair copy ends at this point, so far as writing is concerned, but seven page-sketches are inserted: (1) A mountain gorge; (2) mountain heights, a castle on one; (3) a river between steep banks, snow mountains in the distance; (4) a mountain scene, châlet in foreground; (5) *a*, a mountain scene, *b*, a lake with a house on piers islanded on it; (6) a lake-side, with terraced gardens, hills behind; (7) aiguilles. These sketches belong to the later portion of the "Tour," of which the author did not make a fair copy.]

[2] [Heidelberg was in fact taken by Count Mélac, who reduced the castle to ruins in 1689, fourteen years after the death of Turenne. The Great Tun in the cellar is still one of the sights of the place.]

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Why, they seem to have stopped puffing off powder here as if they were afraid of shaking up the lees of the good old respectable wines. Even the timber of the new-fangled fashionable cask (which, following the example of the ladies nowadays, has gone without hoops) are not a whit disturbed, but sit there in peaceful placidity, clasping each other in brotherly affection, but dry, very dry, unconscionably dry. And the celebrated butt sounds mournfully hollow—no rich splash from the enclosed *vinum*, no ruby red tinging the joints of the timbers. Oh, Bacchus! Bacchus! come not into the cellars of Heidelberg, lest thou shouldest die of thirst.

[THE BLACK FOREST]

Oh! the morn looked bright on hill and dale,
As we left the walls of merry [Kehl],[1]
And tow'rds the long hill-ridges wound
That ramparted the plain around,—
That, greener growing as we neared,
At length with meadows decked appeared
Fair as our fields in May; and then
We entered on a little glen,
Those miniature Alps among,
All smiling with a morning sun;
Grassy, and woody, and most sweet
As ever fairy her retreat
Formed for her midnight dances. Through—
Tracing, in mazy winds anew,
The spots it had passed o'er, as fain
To run its sweet course o'er again,—
Flowed a small tributary stream
That the Rhine levied. All between
The frontlets of the fair, fresh hills
Leaped merrily the glad, young rills,
Smiling in silver as they sprang,
And merry were the notes they sang:
For they were joyful at their birth
From the cold prisons of the earth
To the warm sun, and open sky;
And their song was all of liberty.
But the dell narrowed as we went;
Till, 'twixt the promontories pent

[1] ["*Kehl*, line 2, is my conjecture; the word in the original is illegible. The poem must refer to the day's journey described in *Præterita*, i. ch. vi. § 130: 'Earliest morning saw us trotting over the bridge of boats to Kehl, and in the eastern light I well remember watching the Black Forest hills enlarge and rise as we crossed the plain of the Rhine.'"—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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THE RHINE

The traditions of the Rhine have long since been celebrated, and I hope long will be so, for the terror and amusement, if not the benefit, of the rising generation. The two districts of the Rhine and the Hartz have been selected from time immemorial as fitting theatres for the gambols of brownies, fairies, gnomes, and all other fashionable hobgoblins of every shape, sort, and size; and the consequence is, that a midnight walk through the forests of the Hartz, or the vaulted chambers of Rheinfels, would be considered, by many persons possess'd of considerable strength of nerve in the day-time and in places not haunted, as a very disagreeable, if not positively dangerous affair. Marvel not, therefore, reader, if I inform you that I considered myself upon suspicious, if not enchanted, or even haunted ground, as soon as we came in sight of the crags of Drachenfels, and that my thirst for ancient rhyme or story became considerably augmented as we advanced farther into that wilderness of rock and fortress, which must be traversed by the voyageur who passes between Ehrenbreitstein and St. Goar. I could not hope for much true dictionary lore from most of the personages whom we encountered on any of our perambulations, judging from their countenances, at least. I do not, at present, remember any physiognomies which exhibit so much of, let me see, a combination of the stupidity, lifelessness, and laziness of the owl, with the ugliness of the monkey, as do those of the generality of the German peasantry and lower classes; and I was therefore not particularly tempted to interrogate any of them upon the subject before alluded to, until at length Fortune threw an individual in my way who appeared likely to be able to answer any inquiries which I might make, entirely to my own satisfaction.[1]

We saw it where its billow swells
Beneath the ridge of Drachenfels;
We saw it where its ripples ride
'Neath Ehrenbreitstein's beetling pride;
We saw it where its whirlpools roar
Among the rocks of gaunt St. Goar—
In all its aspect is as fair!
That aspect changes everywhere.
From Rhætian and Dinaric crest,
From the wild waters to the west,
From fearful Splügen's glaciered head,
The mighty torrent dashes, dread;

[1] [There is nothing in the MS. to explain the reference here. It is conceivable that Ruskin had at this time formed some idea of the fairy story, with a German setting, which afterwards became *The King of the Golden River*, or the allusion may be to "The Emigration of the Sprites," stanza x.; see above, p. 13.]

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And, swelled by every Alpine snow,
Now see it chase these cliffs below,
On whose high summits deeply rent
Rise many a fortress battlement,
Seeming the lords of rock and hill,
And mighty in their ruin still.

VIA MALA[1]

Our path is on the precipice!
How far, far down those waters hiss
That like an avalanche below
Whirl on a stream of foamy snow!
I've seen the Rhine when in his pride,
All unresisted, undefied,
Rolled smoothly on his aged tide.
I've seen the Rhine with younger wave
O'er every obstacle to rave.
I see the Rhine in his native wild
Is still a mighty mountain child,—
How rocked upon his tortuous bed!
Came up, from the abyss of dread,
The deafening roar with softened sound,—
Murmuring up from the profound
Of distance dark, where light of day
Pierced not the thick, damp, twilight grey,
To the precipices sharp and sheer
Whence the white foam looked up so clear.
On looking o'er the barrier
From that rock-shelf, that hung so high
'Twixt the far depth and the blue sky,
Above, beside, around there stood
The difficult crags in order rude
Soaring to the thin, cold upper air,—
Looked forth unnaturally clear,
Jagged with many a piny spear.
And here and there a patch of snow
Contrasted strangely with the glow
Of the red, rough, mighty cliffs, and shed
A strange, cold light through the yawning dread
Of the abyssy gulph below.

[1] ["It was again fortunate that we took the grandest pass into Italy,—that the first ravine of the main Alps I saw was the Via Mala" (*Præterita*, i. ch. vi. § 136).]

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SPLÜGEN

A LITTLE cultivated space
Amid the rocky wilderness,—
It was not so conspicuous seen,
Where every mountain top was green;
But that a little hamlet lay,
With its enclosures, 'mid the array
Of the dark pines, most peacefully:
And a few cattle strayed along,
Browsing the grass the rocks among,
Ringing their bells; and here and there,
Poised on rock-pinnacles i' the air,
Looked out from his round glassy eye
The mountain goat suspiciously.
And, drop by drop, a little spring
Down the smooth crag came glistering,
With a sweet, tinkling sound, and fell
Into a mossed receptacle,—
The long trunk of an aged fir:
You scarce could see the water there,
So clear it ran, and sparkled round,
Then gurgled o'er the grassy ground,
Marking its course by the fresh green
Of the grass-blades it danced between.
I drank, and rested, and would fain
Have stopped to gaze, and gaze again,
And rest awhile the wearied eye,
Wearied with wild sublimity.
No! on! the peaceful bourne is past;
The rocks around are closing fast:
Higher and higher tow'rds the heaven
Betwixt the cliffs our road is riven;
Or twining round the hillside bare
With many a bend, where the high air
'Gan to blow cold, and damp, and keen,
But sharp, and pressureless. The green,
Though fresh upon the mountain side,
Was now more thinly scatterèd.
Now might you see, in sheltered nook,
The snow arch o'er the icy brook,
With strange, white, delicate, bridgy curve
That the green light shot through above.
And round, beneath, beside, there grew
The Alpine rose's heathery hue,

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That blushed along the mountain head.
Was never flow'r so regal red!
It climbed the scathed old rocks along,—
Looked out, the cold, white snow among,
And, where no other flower would blow,
There you might see the red rose grow.[1]

THE SUMMIT

Oh, we are on the mountain-top!
The clouds float by in fleecy flock,
Heavy, and dank. Around, below,
A wilderness of turf and snow,—
Scanty rock turf, or marble bare,
Without a living thing; for there
Not a bird clove the thin, cold air
With labouring wing: the very goat
To such a height ascendeth not;
And if the cloud's thick drapery
Clove for a moment, you would see
The long, white snow fields on each side
Clasping the mountain-breast, or heaped
In high, wreathed hills, whence torrents leaped,
And gathering force, as down they well
To aid the swift Rhine's headlong swell.
And here and there a mould'ring cross
Of dark pine, matted o'er with moss,
Hung o'er[2] the precipice, to tell
Where some benighted traveller fell;
Or where the avalanche's leap
Hurled down, with its wild thunder sweep,
Him unexpecting; and to pray
The passing traveller to stay,
And, looking from the precipice
Dizzily down to the abyss,
To wing to heaven one short prayer,
One, for the soul that parted there.[3]

[1] [This was of course the so-called "Alpine rose," *i.e.* rhododendron. Ruskin never lost his particular affection for this flower: see, *e.g. Sesame and Lilies*, preface to second edition.]

[2] [The ed. of 1891 reads "on."]

[3] [The rest of this passage, and that headed "The Descent," were omitted in the ed. of 1891. It is interesting to note that even in the excitement of new impressions among the Alps, the boy's thoughts revert to the hills of the Lake Country; *cf.* above, p. xxx. *n.*]

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I thought, as by the cross I past,
Of far Helvellyn's dreary waste,
'Mid my own hills, and legend strange;
How from dark Striden's[1] ridgy range
One fell, upon a wintry day,
When snow wreaths white concealed his way,
And died, beside a small dark tarn,
O'erlooked by crags, whose foreheads stern
Shut in a little vale; a spot
By men unknown and trodden not,
Green, and most beautiful, and lay
His bones there whitening, many a day,
Though sun and rain might work their will,
From bird and wolf protected still;
For he had one companion, one,
Watched o'er him in the desert lone;
That faithful dog beside sat aye
Baying the vulture from his prey,
Else moved not, slept not, stirred not, still
O'er lake and mountain, rock and rill,
Rung his short, plaintive, timid cry,
Most melancholy. None passed by,
None heard his sorrowing call for aid,
Yet still beside the corse he staid,
And watched it moulder, and the clay,
When three long months had past away,
It was discovered where it lay,
And he beside it. Would that we could love
As he did.

THE DESCENT

A FEARFUL mountain wall, whose sweep
At one sheer plunge, six thousand feet,
Stoops to the valley; on each side
Is tossed a very ocean tide,
Of surgy, snowy mountain crest;
And all along that hill's steep breast
With snake-like coilings, wound our way
On narrow shelves of rock, that lay
Almost o'erhanging, and so sheer,
'Twas terror to look down, so near
To such a precipice of fear.

[1] [Striding Edge. For another reference to Gough and his dog, see Vol. I. p. 416.]

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And far before, and far behind,
We tracked our dread way's mazy wind,
Continuous and descending, low,
At length looked up to the white snow
From the deep valley, it would seem
Incredible, a very dream,
That we had scaled a ridge so high,
Or climbed so near the domy sky;
And we wound on, beside the course
Of a roaring torrent's flashing force;
And many a fall of minor stream
Down the smooth rocks came thundering,
Or in white sheets of gauzy foam
Mingled with archy iris shone
Among the forest pines.

CHIAVENNA

Oh, softly blew the mounting breeze
Through Chiavenna's myrtle trees,
And o'er the green hills' viny spread,
That rose in many a rounded head
Beneath the Alpine rocks of red.
And the fresh snow had fall'n that night,
And sprinkled with its mantle white
The mountain amphitheatre
That rose around us far and near,
Though in such far confusion hurled
They looked to rule o'er all the world;
And the white clouds seemed to immerse
Another ruined universe.

LAGO DI COMO[1]

It was a little peaceful bay
Beneath the precipices grey,
Lay deep and blue and calm, but clear
As is the sapphire; and you saw

[1] [See *Præterita*, i. ch. vi. § 136; and cf. *Poetry of Architecture*, § 102, in Vol. I. p. 77.]

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The precipices sharp and sheer,
And the white clouds' careering war,
And the blue sky, and the high hills
'Neath the cold waters where they slept
Seemed fed by thousand mountain rills
Flowed upward from the crystal depth.[1]
And all along that quiet bay
A range of little shipping lay,
With their red flags drooped downward right,
And sheltered by their awnings white
From the high sun's red, scorching look,
That o'er the living waters shook
A blaze of hot and swarthy glow.
When we had launchèd from below
The shade of the tall cliffs, and came
Where Como rolled his breast of flame,
Down southward winding far away,
The olives' tints of gentle grey
Stooped to his borders, from between
The hills' uncultivated green.
And orange-groves him girded round,
Blossoming o'er him fragrantly;
And in the sleep of his profound
White villages shone silently.[2]
And from our prow the ripple's flash
Threw forth its little sparkles paly;
The light sound of the oars' dash[3]
Came dancing on the waters gaily.
There was blue above, and blue below,
And the gleam of the eternal snow.
Forth from the fastnesses it came
Of the high Alps' retiring chain.[4]
And all along the shore, where'er
The storm-winds wont to chafe the wave,
The crucifix is shrined there;
That Christ may hear the passioned prayer
—May hear, may pity, and may save!

[1] [The above ten lines were omitted in the ed. of 1891.]

[2] [In *The Poetry of Architecture* (§ 116), Ruskin describes the crystalline waters of the lake, "of which," he adds, quoting partly his own early verses, "some one aptly says, 'Deep within its azure rest, white villages sleep silently.'"]

[3] [So in the MS., the word o-ar making two syllables. Altered in the ed. of 1891 to "oar [blade's] dash."]

[4] [This and the preceding line were omitted from the ed. of 1891.]

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CADENABBIA

Oh! coolly came, on Como's lake,
The lovely beams of morning mild,
That o'er the Lecco mountains break,
And red their summits piled;
That, high above their olive shore
Their weary winter garments bore.
The broad boat lay along the tide;
The light waves lapped its sloping side,
And soft perfume of orange-trees
By fits came on the landward breeze.
The trouts shot through the waters blue,
Like small stars in the heaven glancing;
Or hid them where the broad weeds grew,
With wavy motion dancing.
Away, away, across the lake
How fast retires yon myrtle brake,
All sprinkled with a silver shower,
Through the dark leaves of lemon flower.
Clear, as if near,—nor faint, though far,
Shines on the mountain, like a star,
The rock born torrent's milky spray.
And many a small boat on its way
Urged by a breeze that bore them well,
Though unfelt as invisible,
With sunshine on their winglike sail
Past, like young eaglets on the gale.

The steps were broken, mossed, and steep;
The waters sparkling, clear, and deep;
The rock was high, the cavern dark,
Scarce lit up by the jewelled spark
Of the cold stream that under earth
Was darkling buried at its birth;
Nor once its wave had sunned, nor seen
Aught but dark rock, and ice caves green,
Where the dark waters, as a home,
Received the torrent's churned foam.
We launched again, and downward bore
A while beside the centre shore;
Then left the shadowy eastern lake,—
Crossed through thick vines the wooded cape,—
Struck the clear wave with long, light oar,—

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Left a white wake that sought the shore;
High o'er the boat the awning spread,
And, quick as sunned waves flashed before,
Toward the southward fled.

VILLA PLINIANA[1]

I LOVE to hear the names of those
Who long ago have past away,
Though now their names be drowned by clay.
And who would stand where they repose,
And look upon their dust, and say
That this was Trajan, and below
This foot of mine, lies cold and low,
Earth, which compounded long ago
What held the soul of Cæsar.
How peaceful is the turbulence
Of spirits, whose high deeds long hence
Shall still be told as now!
How strange those mighty powers that hurled
With change and terror o'er the world
Should pass away, we know not how!
That one would wonder how a thing
So temporary, perishing,
Should dare such deeds, or work such change
I' the texture of the world.
There have been many mighty,
And many more renowned;
The ignoble and the glorious
Are underneath the ground.

MILAN CATHEDRAL

THE heat of summer day is sped;
On far Mont Rose the sun is red;
And mark you Milan's marble pile
Glow with the mellow rays awhile!

[1] [The section on the Villa Pliniana (viii.) was omitted in the ed. of 1891; *cf. Poetry of Architecture*, § 216, Vol. I. p. 161.]

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Lo, there relieved, his front so high
On the blue sky of Italy!
While higher still above him bear,
And slender in proportion fair,
Fretted with Gothic carving well,
Full many a spiry pinnacle;
And dazzling bright as Rosa's crest,
Each with his sculptured statue prest,
They seem to stand in that thin air
As on a thread of gossamer.
You think the evening zephyr's play
Could sweep them from their post away,
And bear them on its sportful wing
As autumn leaves, wild scattering.

[LAGO MAGGIORE]

It was an eve of summer, mild
As ever looked the pale moon through,
That the deep waters were beguiled
Into such rest, that, as the blue,—
The moveless blue of the high heaven,—
Such sleep was to the low lake given
That, as in lethargy, it lay
Waveless and tideless, soft and grey
As chasmless glacier. Voicelessly
The little barks came gliding by
Apparently without a wind,
Leaving long ripply wakes behind.
It would have seemed a lifeless sea,
But there arose colossally,
Beyond the mist-horizon, where
The waters mingled with the air,
The spirits of gigantic things,—
Lords of the earth, and air, and sky,
Where, while heaven's cloud around them flings
Concealment everlastingly,
The mountain-snow, like scattered flocks,
Speckled on high the red ribbed rocks,
Or down the ravine's rolling blue
Its crisped surge o'er the green fields threw,
Flinging the ice-waves far and wide,
Like the tortured spray of the ocean tide
Breaking broad on the mountain side.

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Yet was there such a softness shed
Upon the rude Alps' stormy head,
On massive wood and russet brake,
Flashing river and polished lake
So broadly stretched in sapphire sheet,—
Another heaven 'neath our feet
Of deeper, darker, lovelier blue,—
It seemed that we were looking through
Those æther fields, so pure, so high,
Above the concave of the sky,
Where nor storm nor tempest cometh nigh,
And the moon she sits in her majesty.

GENOA

Now rouse thee, ho! For Genoa straight!
We did not for the dawning wait;
The stars shone pale on Novi's gate,
And on the airy Apennine,
Whose towery steeps, with morn elate,
Lay southward in a lengthened line.
And we knew,—and we knew,—and we knew
That from Elba to the Alps, o'er the sea's broad blue,[1]
Where the wild waves wander and white ripples shine,
Looked the cloudy crest of the tall Apennine!
From the torrent's barren bed,
Bound by blocks of granite red,
Came the gay cicada's song;
Wheresoe'er the dew was dank
On the tree, the shrub, the bank
All our scorching road along
Came the gay cicada's song.
While, beside our path, was seen
Of various trees a vista green,
Into the streamlet looking down,
Whose living crystal shot between,
All trembling with the leafy gleam.
And coolly on a high arch span
The sportive light reflected ran
Hither and thither fast; and through
That natural arched avenue
There showed a rich and mighty plain,
Rolling its wooded waves away;
And, through the stretch of that champaign,
A noble river wound its way.

[1] [In the ed. of 1891, "the broad sea's blue."]

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And on the horizon to the north
Pale gleams of icy sun came forth
From the St. Bernard's fastnesses;
White as the wreathed salt sea-spray,
With the snow wreaths that ever press
Upon that heaven girt boundary,—
Boundary meet for Italy,—
Most meet for such a lovely clime,
As it looks o'er Marengo's sea
Unto the Apennine.
'Tis sweet, a topmost mountain-ridge
Impatiently to climb,
And there to stand, and dream away
A little space of time.
Oh! is there one remembers not
When first he saw the living deep,
With panting bosom, crimson shot,
Call its smooth billows from their sleep,
That shout "the morn!" from steep to steep,—
When far away to seaward show
Her first beam's solitary glow?[1]
Whoe'er thou art, who hast not felt
Thou loved'st to be where sea-birds dwelt,—
To wander on the weary beach,
Just on the line the wild waves reach,
Or watch the petrels flit before
The marching tempest's warning roar,
And ocean-eagles dark and proud,
And white winged ospreys skim the cloud;—
And if thou ne'er hast felt as if
The ocean had a mind,
Nor held communion with the deep,
And converse with the wind,
When broad, black waves before it roll,—
I would not think thou had'st a soul.

PASSING THE ALPS

To-DAY we pass the Alps,—to-day
High o'er the barrier winds our way,—
The barrier of boundless length!
The Queen of nations, in her strength,

[1] [This couplet was omitted in the ed. of 1891.]

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Considered its recesses lone
Beseeming bulwark for her throne;
Until her Carthaginian foe
Had soiled the yet unsullied snow,—
The eagle drove from her retreat,—
And woke the echoes from their sleep,
That ne'er had answerèd before
Save to the avalanche's roar.
Methinks upon the mountain-side
I see the billows of that tide,—
Of men and horses headlong driven
As clouds before the blast of heaven,
That ever change their hurrying form
In dark foreboding of the storm;
When the low sun's last light is shed
In glowing streaks of swarthy red;
And from his cave with fitful swell
Wakes the wild tempest's sounding shell.
So see the plumes, in dark array,
Roll on their yet untrodden way,
Unbroken yet with dreadful sweep!
Mark you that stormy, changeful deep?
Wave after wave is eddying on
And crested casque and morion
Flash frequent as the lightning flies
Among the armies of the skies.
But fiercer storm is gathering now
Than ever broke on Alpine brow;
And wild shall the confusion be,—
The strife of that tremendous sea
When, bursting from the Alpine chain,
It meets the storm on Cannæ's plain.

CHAMOUNI[1]

And this is our last excursion on Swiss ground, thought I, scanning the provoking clouds that ever rolled massively among the regions of eternal snow, though far above the blue mountains that encircle their mighty monarch. I have always a sort of kindred feeling for these beautiful blue hills; they ever look half English, and I love them for it. They may not be so wonderful, so majestic, so mighty, or so beautiful, but

[1] [The prose passage on Chamouni is inserted from a volume of MSS., 1827–44, where it is described as "Fragment from a Journal, 1833." It is copied in a lady's hand (query—his mother's). His father has added the signature J. R. at the end, and the description above given.]

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The Jungfrau from Interlaken.
1833.

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they are more like home, sweet home, and it is pleasant, very pleasant, to meet a friend in a foreign land. We are going to Chamouni, *c'est vrai*, but it seems exceeding strange. Before we left home, I had read of Chamouni, heard of Chamouni, and seen some few drawings of Chamouni, but never so much as dreamed of going to Chamouni, it seemed so un-come-at-able; and for the Mont Blanc, it seemed in another world, in fairy-land, and of course had a magic halo thrown round it, an ætherialness that can never be joined with reality. That halo comes again on looking back. And this is our last excursion on Swiss ground, thought I, the last, and the wildest, and the sweetest, because—because, perhaps it is the last. The day was exceedingly favourable for the scenery of the lower mountains, not for the Alps; they were reserved for other times. The noon verged gradually from burning sunshine to thick thundery clouds, that rolled rapidly over the murky heaven as we entered a solitary mountain recess, a cliffy defile, leading from the valley of Maglan to that of Salenches. Down they burst with a fierce rattling turmoil and headlong flash, flash, flashing, and the bridleless clouds careered along the crags at such a wild rate that their own speed broke them into scattered confusion, that the blue sky shone calmly through their openings, and the labouring sun struggled strangely—now gleaming waterily on the red-ribbed skeleton crags, now mingling with the quiver of the lightning, now again plunged into the swift rack of the thunder-clouds that seemed sweeping round the mountain summits like lashed ocean waves round a labouring vessel. The Arve swelled on the instant, and his turbid waves tore madly down, trees, stones, rocks, all tost along the channel, by the arrowy force of that resistless river, ever mighty, but now fearful. As the sun verged towards the horizon, the clouds swept partially away; the hills, the cliffs, the mountains, the rocks, and the blue vaulted sky glowed with his last rays for a moment; he sunk and the night came, his darkness made yet more visible by the thunder gloom of the storm.

"Voilà les aiguilles," quoth our char-à-banc driver. If any person in the whole world is totally insensible to pain, knocks, aches, and bruises, it must be a Swiss char-à-banc driver. The Swiss char-à-banc is a vehicle expressly built for the purpose of passing over those roads, which no other species of conveyance can pass over twelve yards of without immediate demolition. It is a sort of large side-saddle, capable of containing, if well packed, three pauvres miserables, with a back and roof to it, and a board to put the feet on, with a leather to keep you in, all which are of a most ancient and venerable description; this is fixed totally without springs or anything of the kind, as far as I could see, upon four wheels, et voilà un char-à-banc. With this kind of vehicle, upon roads which always resemble and are often carried through the beds of tumbling mountain torrents, any one may easily imagine the sort of pleasurable penance to which he is subjected who submits to be driven from Salenches up to Chamouni in a char-à-banc.

"Voilà les aiguilles," quoth our char-à-banc driver. How I started, I believe I was dreaming of home at the time; it is odd you always think

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it would be very pleasant to be where you are not; it can't be helped, but it is very provoking, the charms of a place always increase in geometrical ratio as you get farther from it, and therefore 'tis a rich pleasure to look back on anything, though it has a dash of regret. It is singular that almost all pleasure is past, or coming. Well, I looked up, and lo! seven thousand feet above me soared the needles of Mont Blanc, splintered and crashed and shivered, the marks of the tempest for three score centuries, yet they are here, shooting up red, bare, scarcely even lichened, entirely inaccessible, snowless, the very snow cannot cling to the down-plunging sheerness of these terrific flanks that rise pre-eminently dizzying and beetling above the sea of wreathed snow that rolled its long surging waves over the summits of the lower and less precipitous mountains. Then came the stretching gloominess of the pine forests, jagging darkly upon the ridge of every crag, strangely contrasted with the cold blueness of the peaky glaciers that filled the huge ravines between the hills, descending like the bursting billows of a chafed ocean tide from the desolate dominion of the snow, and curling forward till they lay on the green fields of Chamouni, which stretched away, one unbroken line of luxuriance, till bounded by the lonely desertness of the Col de Balme. There is not another scene like Chamouni throughout all Switzerland. In no other spot that I have seen is the rich luxuriance of the cultivated valley, the flashing splendour of the eternal snow, the impending magnificence of the bare, spiry crag, and the strange, cold rigidity of the surgy glaciers so dreadfully and beautifully combined. There is silence unbroken, no thunder of the avalanche comes crashing from the recesses of the hills, there is no voice from the chasmy glacier, no murmur from the thousand mountain streams, you are in solitude, a strange unearthly solitude, but you feel as if the air were full of spirits.

The wreathing clouds are fleeting fast,[1]
Deep shade upon the hills they cast,
While through their openings ever show
Enormous pyramids of snow;
Scarce can you tell in middle air
If cloud or mountain rises there,
Yet may you mark the glittering light
That glances from the glaciered height;
And you may mark the shades that sever
The throne where winter sits for ever,
The avalanche's thunder rolling,
No summer heat his reign controlling;
The gloomy tyrant in his pride
Spreads his dominion far and wide,
Till, set with many an icy gem,
Rises his cliffy diadem.[2]

[1] [*Cf.* the first line of "Brussels" above, p. 346.]

[2] [This rhyme was used again in later pieces; see below, p. 432, and "Salsette and Elephanta," lines 121–122 and 270–271, above, pp. 95, 100.]

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Above a steepy crag we wound
Where gloomy pines his forehead crowned;
And heard we, with a sullen swell,
The turbid Arve dash through the dell;
You might have thought it, moaning by,
Wail for the loss of liberty;
For high the rocks whose mighty screen
Confined the narrow pass between,
And many a mass of granite grey
Opposed the torrent's forceful way;
So headlong rushed the lightning tide,
No pass was there for aught beside;
And we high o'er those cliffs so sheer
Must climb the mountain barrier,
Until unfolded to the eye
The fruitful fields of Chamouni.

It lay before us, as a child
Of beauty in the desert wild;
Full strange it seemed that thing so fair,
So fairy-like, could harbour there;
For fields of bending corn there grew
Close to the glacier's wintry blue;
And saw we the same sun-ray shine
On pasture gay and mountain pine,
Whose dark and spiry forests rose
Till mingled with eternal snows
That climbed into the clear blue sky
In peaked, impending majesty.
'Tis passing strange that such a place
In all its native loveliness
Should, pent within those wilds so lone,
For many ages pass unknown—

Unknown save by a simple few
Who their own valley only knew,
Nor dared the mountain ridge that bound
That lovely vale with terrors round;
That lived secluded from mankind,
Contented yet in heart and mind;
That lived within that world alone,
A world of beauty of their own.[1]
And now Helvetia's cliffy reign
Contains not in her Alpine chain,
In valley deep, on mountain high,
A race like those of Chamouni;

[1] [*Cf.* "The Crystal Hunter," below, p. 388.]

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For they have loved, at dawn of day,
To trace the chamois' fearful way,
Or on the toppling shelf of snow
With crags above and clouds below;
Or on the peak whose spiry head
Is beetling o'er abysses dread,
Where place for foot, and grasp for hand,
Is all the hunter can command;
Or on the glacier's rigid wave
Where he may find a chasmy grave;
Returning with his spoils at even
Ere the red sun hath left the heaven.[1]

[THE ARVE AT CHAMOUNI

I woke to hear the lullaby
Of the swift river rolling by,—
Monotonous yet beautiful
Ever the gentle pebbly swell!
And every ripple lent his plash
Joining in chorus with the dash
Of every mighty mountain stream
That joyful sung his morning hymn,
His iris-glory round him quivering
Where his white showery falls were shivering.
There is a melancholy smile
On nature's features fair the while,
When the dank dews descending grey
Weep for the loss of parting day;

[1] [In the MS. Book viii., which contains the first draft of the "Tour," the following lines—descriptive, probably, of the Alps—immediately precede the prose passage on "The Source of the Arveron" (below, p. 386), and the above lines, "I woke to hear the lullaby":—

"Oh, are there spirits, can there be
Things of such wondrous mystery?
Oh, are there spirits, can a mind
Float bodiless and unconfined?
Or can the air, the earth, the sea
Be filled with immortality?
Some say that in the cold moonlight
There hovereth many a changing sprite.
Some say the wind,—and who can tell?—
Bears spirits' voices in its swell.
But if upon our mortal sense
There rules unearthly influence—
If there be sprites in earth or air,
They surely have their dwelling there."]

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There is a sad and soft complaining
In the light breeze when day is waning;
The evening star is fair and full,
But it is passing sorrowful;
And merry is the laughing light
That blushes o'er the heaven's height,
That stream and bird and breeze and tree
For very joy sing merrily,
When wakes the morn the mountain snows
From their cold, fixed, pale repose.
It was a most enchanting vision!
The morning mists had upward risen
And, floating in the fields of air,
Lay in long lines most calmly there.
You could not call them clouds, I wist,
They were not smoke, they were not mist;
They were a sort of visible breeze
Touching the tops of the pine-trees
That, as we passed beneath and strook
Their stretchy branches, ever shook
The laughing showers of dancing dew
Reflecting every rainbow hue,
Or clinging to the clusters dank
Of bright green moss upon the bank.
And where those pines their crests had cloven
How rich the sun was interwoven!
And smiling through the leafy shade
Among the spangled grass it played,
And drank the dew from flower and blade,
Melting the heavy drops to air
That so dragged down the gossamer.

[EVENING AT CHAMOUNI]

Nor such the night whose stormy might
Heroic Balmat braved,[1]
When, darkening on the Goûté's height,
The tempest howled and raved.
Upon the mighty hill, forlorn,
He stood alone amid the storm;

[1] ["It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that this refers to the first ascent of Mont Blanc in 1786 by Jacques Balmat."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. The "Goûté's height" is the Dôme, or the Aiguille, du Goûter. For an account of Balmat's ascent, see ch. iv. in *The Annals of Mont Blanc*, by C. E. Matthews (1898).]

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Watching the last day gleams decay,
Supposing its returning ray
Should see him lying there asleep,
With Alpine snow for winding sheet.
Methinks I see him, as he stood
Upon the ridge of snow;
The battering burst of winds above,—
The cloudy precipice below,—
Watching the dawn. With proud delight
He saw that long, tempestuous night
Drive to the westward, and unfold
The ocean snow-fields, upward rolled,
Bright with the morning's glance of gold.
It past away,—the tossing flood
Of changing vapour, headlong riding;
And lo! the untrodden summit stood
Accessibly beside him.

[THE SOURCE OF THE ARVERON]

What a delicious thing is a reverie, that total abstraction from all things present—that stilly, dreamy, waking vision that places you where you are not, that carries you where you wish to be, that presents the past to your recollection, and the future to your fancy, so forcibly, so impressively, so lovelily, throwing a glow on every circumstance, and a halo on every feature, giving the vivid, the magic colouring of the dream to the defined and distinct recollection of the reality. It is thus that I look back upon our first walk at Chamouni, to the Source of the Arveron. What varieties of childish beauty we met with in that short walk, every little mountaineer was a perfect picture; one little fellow insisted upon conducting us to the source, and as *notre guide principale* piloted us proudly through the crowd of little fry who were lying in wait, all expecting a similar distinction, but who, finding the post of honour preoccupied, followed very gravely *en suite*. "Voilà la source," quoth our *petit conducteur*, as we emerged from a dark wood of pines bordering on the waves of the flowing Arveron. It was exceeding lovely. The day had been one continued succession of storms, but the eve was breaking and giving fair promise of a sunny morrow. Right in front a few exhausted but lingering tempest clouds shadowed the dark masses of pine that girdle the Montanvert, but farther to the west broke away into fleecy masses, scarcely distinguishable from the eternal snow that flashed through their openings, and farther still a serene evening sky glowed peacefully. A lurid, ominous light pervaded the whole air, that stormy and murky lume, the effect of the strange combat between the sun and tempest; the one casting the whole body of gigantic

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mountains into a dreary darkness, the other pouring a stream of red, ghostly, dusky light up the valley, that caught as it past the projecting pinnacled spires of the glacier des Bossons, which flashed dazzling forth from the gloom of the ribbed crags as the lightning leaps from the thunder cloud. A low, hollow, melancholy echoing was heard issuing from the recesses of the mountains, the last sighing of the passing-away tempest, the last murmurs of the storm spirit as he yielded up his reign; it past away, and the blue rigidness of the transparent cavern of the glacier woke rosily to the departing sun.

The foam-globes [1] round come riding fast,
Like snow upon the eddies cast.
Forth from his cold and silent tomb,
Forth flies the river from the gloom.
The bars that echoed to his roaring—
Those icy bars have burst before him.
And now his chafèd surges see
Bound high in laughing liberty!
Oh, frigidly the glacier pale
Bears broadly to the nether vale!
Right in his cliffy, shivered side
Yawneth a chasm high and wide,
And from the portal arched and strong
Springs gladsome forth the Arveron.
Seems it an ancient forteresse,
All shattered in its mightiness;
The higher towers all rent and riven—
The battlements all [2] downward driven—
And, that its form thou now couldst trace,
Froze to an icy [3] wilderness:
And that, its portal vast and old,
All archèd by the crisp ice cold,
And through whose chasms of paly green
The shivery sunshine shot between,
Or trembling with a meteor light,
Or dancing in the billows bright,
Smiling aetherially through
The ghost lights of the crystal blue.

[1] [See above, note on p. 62.]
[2] [The ed. of 1891 reads "are" for "all."]
[3] [The ed. of 1891 reads "a mighty."]

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1834

(AT 15 YEARS OF AGE)[1]

THE CRYSTAL-HUNTER

[A FANTASY][2]

[1] [1834 was a year less productive of poetry than its predecessor, but busier in study. "At Herne Hill, for birthday gift, he received Saussure's *Voyages dans les Alpes* (Feb. 8). Published in Loudon's *Mag. of Natural History* a 'Letter on the Colour of the Rhine' and 'Mont Blanc and Twisted Strata' (March). [See Vol. I. pp. 191, 194.] Continued the 'Tour,' and wrote 'The Crystal-Hunter' (May). This spring, he was studying poetry after Byron, drawing after Turner, architecture after Prout, geology after Saussure, and mineralogy after Jameson and at the British Museum; beside school-work,—classics under Dale, and mathematics under Rowbotham. During the summer holidays he visited Windsor, Oxford, Cheltenham, Malvern, and Salisbury (June 30–July 23); then returned to school; and wrote 'Invention of Quadrilles' and 'The Months' (Dec.)."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. The verses on "The Months" have already been given (p. 5). The only verses of 1834 among the MSS., in addition to those here given, are two rhyming letters to his father, and two or three pieces which seem to have been intended for a composition on vintage generally and in praise of his father's sherry in particular. From one of these, a New Year's Address (perhaps written at the end of 1833), beginning "The dawn is breaking on the bending hills," the following lines may be quoted :—

> "There's nothing like racy old sack, sir!
> Bottles of sack be there none whole!
> Drinking French liquors we're sick o't;
> So, may sherry be drunk at the bunghole,
> And all other wines at the spigot!
> Ho! for the grape pips, hey for the wine sticks,
> Black uns and white uns and all!
> Ho! the grape berries and wine of good Xeres,
> Vats, butts, cellars and all!"]

[2] [So described in the *Poems*, 1891 (i. 167–174), where the verses were first printed. They were written for his father's birthday, and sent to him with the usual rhyming Birthday Address, which, after various good wishes (including a wish that all other wines may be out of sort, leaving a clear field for sherry), thus continues:—

> "Most humbly also thou art here invited
> To read these other trifles, fables, froth."

The piece is "a sort of fantasia upon the scenery and mineralogy in which the author had revelled the year before. The 'Argument' seems to be that a crystal-hunter from a valley in the neighbourhood of Mont Blanc—born in Val Anzasca, but not necessarily starting thence—finds a cavern through which he penetrates into the valley of Chamouni, unknown before, but thereupon colonised. With this argument it is inconsistent that he claims to have anticipated Mr. Dent on the Dru; but the letter introducing the poem (in the original MS.) offers it as 'fables, froth': and it is worthy of a place, though unpolished in style, as an enthusiastic myth with a sober moral."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. Messrs. C. T. Dent and Hartley made the first ascent of the Dru in 1878. Legends of subterranean passages, glacier infernos, and lost valleys are common in the Alps: see, *e.g.*, S. W. King's *Italian Valleys*, p. 381, and W. A. B. Coolidge's *Swiss Travel*, pp. 266–267. Of "The Crystal Hunter" there is a rough draft in MS. Book viii., and also a fair copy in ia. It is here printed from the latter.]

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I

The Crystal-hunter leaped aloft,—
Who shall climb so high as he
By the ribbed rock or the frozen sea?[1]
And he hath past the avalanche,
New-fallen though it be.
The rock-moraine he heedeth not,
Nor torrent fierce and free;
Of these, and more, he bears the brunt;—
That granite wall upreared in front
To him no barrier must hold.
With morning strength, and bearing bold,
High on the mist-crag he must dare
A pathway in the middle air,
Where the white quartz with snowy streak
Marbles the frontlet of the peak.

II

One effort more! He gains the top.
A moment on yon hanging rock
He stands to rest him, and to breathe,
Yet dares not cast his glance beneath;
But fixed his eye, and nerved his limb,
To make the last decisive spring.

III

A troubled glance the hunter threw;—
"My limb hath scaled the Cervin,—Dru,—
Doth it here fail me? Rather may
The shivering granite fall away!"
And he spoke truth. The fearful ledge,
Projecting from its parent ridge,
Wavered beneath him. One more roll;—
Ave Maria, for his soul!
It hung a moment. Nerve thee well!
It trembled, toppled, forward fell,
And bounded like a young gazelle
Into the air. Six thousand feet
The roaring fragment down the steep
Dashed, like a meteor. Once,—twice,—thrice,—
Loud crashed the echoes o'er the ice.

[1] [The draft brackets these two lines and reads, "By dark ribbed rocks," and adds:—

"And he sang a song of the hill countrie,
A song of the glacières, made long ago
By the children of the cloud, by the dwellers on the snow;"

and then begins a new stanza with what is now the fourth line.]

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The torrents moved[1] and spoke; the breeze
Gave sound of life among the trees;
And one blue lake:—its gentle sweep
Owned, by the ripple on its deep,
All else was slumbering and sleep.

X

The place had no inhabitant;
Nor through its coverts came
The step of any living thing.
It had nor memory nor name
Though a more heaven-like dwelling-place
Had never man's corrupted race.[2]

XI

There was a gathering of the Swiss,
When young Pierre had told his tale.
But clouds were on the mountain-brow,
And mist upon the vale.
And who shall dare the granite now
Amid the cloud to scale?

XII

And still the silver hills put on
Their white and cloudy girth:
Impenetrably dark, the heaven
Stooped down upon the earth;
As if 'twould ne'er again be given
To man to see the birth
Of dawn upon the snowy hill,
Breaking broad and beautiful.

XIII

Long time had passed away before
The wild east wind awoke,
And rushing on the mountain top
The cloudy phalanx broke.
Then lustrously the ruby morn
Upon the châlets rose,
And gaily o'er the glacier
The crystal-hunter goes.
A hundred men they followed him,
As firm of foot as he;
And through the cleft and cavern cold
Past onward merrily.

[1] [In the ed. of 1891 "waved."]

[2] [The ed. of 1891 here indicates an omission, but nothing is here left out from the MS.]

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And loud the shout that rang around
When opened to their view
The meadows by the icebergs bound,
The water's quiet blue;
And up and down the silver sound
Along the mountain flew.

XIV

The meadows might have marvelled then
To see the châlets rise amain;
The woods might wonder, there to see
The people of the hill-countrie
Gathered together in a spot
Till then by mankind trodden not!
And now, who knows not Chamouni?
Is there an eye by which its fame
Hath never once been read?
Is there an eye to which its name
Hath not been blazonèd?
Yet this, the peopled wilderness,
The beautiful, the lone,
Was once a very dreary place,—
One of the mountain fastnesses,—
Undreamed of, and unknown.

XV

I think that nature meant it not
To be a celebrated spot:
That glacier blue, or cloudy rock
Should be a sort of gazing-stock;
Or that her mountain-solitude
Be broken by intrusion rude.[1]
Oh! I would dream, and sit, and see
The avalanches foaming free,
And watch the white and whirling cloud,
And hear the icebergs crashing loud;
And when the silver dawning shone,
Oh! I would climb a peak of snow,
And sit upon its topmost stone,
And see that I was all alone!

[*May* 10.][2]

[1] [Ruskin was to live to see the mountain-solitude of Chamouni more rudely broken than it was in 1834, at which date, indeed, there were not more than three inns in the village. For Ruskin's laments on the later exploitation of the village and valley, see preface to second edition of *Sesame and Lilies*.]

[2] [The date of his father's birthday; written of course before.]

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CANTO I

1

"Now, as you need not ride with whip and spur, I
Beg very seriously to advise
That you should never travel in a hurry."
Thus slowly spoke the doctor,[1] looking wise.
We took the hint, and stopped at Canterbury.
Then in the morning early did we rise,
But not to see the place where old Tom Becket is,
Nor where the monks have heaped such heaps of bones—
I'm sure, enough to make any one sick it is—
Under the old cathedral paving-stones,
Nor any other like[2] antiquities,
Nor the Museum, rich by gifts and loans:
But 'twas to trot to cliff encircled Dover,
And think how we could get the carriage over.

2

For that, they chained and swung it in a minute,
And down the steps we went, and soon were seated.
The boat was pretty full, I wish you'd seen it,
Then we heard such odd sentences repeated,
La, what green water. Bless us, what's that in it?
Why that's a fish, ma'am. No, it's only seaweed.
I wish the water were not quite so rough,
I feel a little curious inside.

journey should be described in a poetic diary in the style of 'Don Juan,' artfully combined with that of 'Childe Harold.' Two cantos of this work were indeed finished—carrying me across France to Chamouni—where I broke down, finding that I had exhausted on the Jura all the descriptive terms at my disposal, and that none were left for the Alps" (*Præterita*, i. ch. viii. § 176). A reason for abandoning this poem, still stronger than any exhaustion of his descriptive powers, was that, before the author had been many weeks at home after this journey, he had discovered a new motive for poetry—his first love-affair (see the poems to Adèle, 1836, p. 461 *seq.*); and he had adopted a new model—Shelley (*Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 210). This journal was written during the tour, as is implied in a remark in the prose postscript to the "Letter from Abroad"—"I have poetry interminable, which you must not sleep over" (p. 438).—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[1] ["I had a sharp attack of pleurisy in the spring of '35, which gave me much gasping pain, and put me in some danger for three or four days, during which our old family physician, Dr. Walshman, and my mother, defended me against the wish of all the scientific people to have me bled. 'He wants all the blood he has in him to fight the illness,' said the old doctor, and brought me well through, weak enough, however, to claim a fortnight's nursing and petting afterwards" (*Præterita*, i. ch. viii. § 176).]

[2] [So the MS. The ed. of 1891 reads "similar" for "like," and in stanza 3 inserts the words "curious" before "set" and "very" before "hot."]

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Steward, some brandy; No, that an't enough.
Ask him—Oh dear! I thought I should have died.
Call you that brandy—never saw such stuff.
Then poke your head over the vessel's side.
One rates the cabin stairs, which he can't go up,
Another hopes the boiler will not blow up.

3

I'm sure enough to fluster any body 'tis
To step upon the stones of Calais quay;
You meet with such a set of oddities;
This way and that you turn yourself to see,
And then you bawl out, "Dear! how hot it is!";
Then you're hauled off—for they make very free,
Those interfering officers of custom—
For they will search, ay, and they will examine;
—It's very impolite, but then, they must, ma'am!
"They should not be so rough, and rout, and ram in
My things so!"—but they're used to it; only trust 'em;
You will make all things right by dint of cramming.
—Now, sir, I hope you've finished with that box;
See, here's the key; and that's the way it locks!

4

There is a monument beneath the wall
Of Calais, as you pass along the pier,—
A plain, unsculptured, low memorial;
Yet pass not by it, stranger; for 'tis dear—
A thing most precious in the sight of all
Who dwell upon the deep. There lie not here
The bones of those whose names thereon you see;
But 'tis a tomb for such as have no tomb,—
Memory of those who have no memory,
Nor even a burial-place, except the gloom
And ceaseless roll of the relentless sea;
For whom no hymn was sung except the boom
Of waves innumerable, and the roar
That their grave makes upon their native shore.

5

Weep not for those who in their honours die,
Whom fame forbids to perish,—for the brave,
The mighty and the glorious, all pass by,
All must go down into the voiceless grave.
Weep not for those for whom whole nations sigh,—
But we will weep for those who died to save

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The stranger perishing. Approach and read!
There's not a name upon yon simple stone
But of a hero. What although the dead
Have all gone down into the deep unknown,
And what although their bones be scattered
All underneath the deep, salt surges thrown?
They speak, for whom their being was surrendered:
They have been wept, and they shall be remembered.

6

Now as I stood beside the tomb, thus thinking,
There came some perfumes o'er the pier—thinks I—
This is not very sweet, I won't say stinking,
Then as I saw some ancient fish close by,
I sentimentally departed winking,
There was a tear, or something, in my eye;
Perhaps the wind had blown the dust into it,
It broke upon my train of sentiment,
I saw the ancient portal, and walked through it;
I need not say to which hotel we went,
But 'twas the best in Calais, and we knew it;
Our trunks were from the custom houses sent,
And then we dined on many a savoury stew
And then we—what is what we did to you?

7

Then by Montreuil to Abbeville we went,—
An ancient place, and picturesque indeed all;
The ramparts round enclose a large extent.
We put our noses into the cathedral
(Much tempted by the outside) with intent
To wander through the naves,[1] and see it all;
But started back, and instant sought the door,
Nought seeing there but dirt and dirty people.
—The marble chequers of the ancient floor,
Oh, citizens of Abbeville, why not sweep well?
We stared about, the Gothic front before,
Surveyed the porch, and criticised the steeple,
Marvelled to see the carving rich, and talked of
The figures standing with their noses knocked off.[2]

[1] [So the MS. The ed. of 1891 reads, "To wander through the nave inside and see 't all."]

[2] ["In this journey of 1835 I first saw Rouen and Venice—Pisa not till 1840; nor could I understand the full power of any of those greater scenes till much later. But for Abbeville, which is the preface and interpretation of Rouen, I was ready on that 5th of June, and felt that here was entrance for me into immediately healthy labour and joy" (*Præterita*, i. ch. ix. § 180).]

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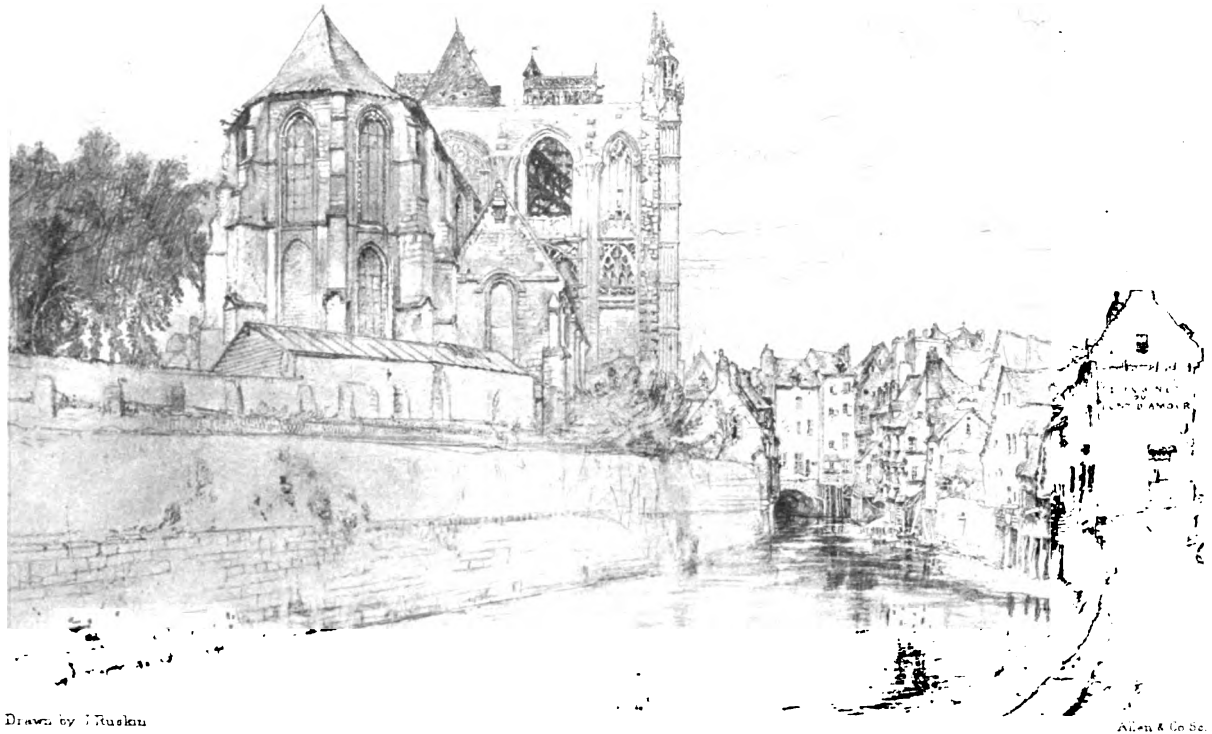

Drawn by J. Ruskin

Allen & Co Sc.

ABBEVILLE.

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But carved and sculptured in a wondrous way,
  Remained to tell how sacred once the place?
Indignant at the deed, we turned away
  Towards the huge Cathedral's western face.
I stood, upstaring at the lofty steeple
—And ran against a dozen market people!

11

It is a marvel, though the statues cramp are,
  How beautifully rich the tower is!
But 'tis amazing what a sudden damper
  Of all enthusiasm a shower is!
Down came a thunder-cloud, which made us scamper
  Under the arch that shows what hour it is.
—I don't admire the plan of elevating
  A clock upon a steeple huge and high,
Where really nobody can see it, bating
  Those who have got a very practised eye;
And people in a hurry can't stand waiting
  Until the clappers tell how time goes by:
Besides, on Gothic work, the great, flat face
Looks quite incongruous, and out of place.

12

So, as the Rouen architects thought fit
  To go upon a plan entirely new,
They built an arch on purpose every bit;
  Chiselled it over, till gay garlands grew
Beneath their hands, where'er their mallets hit,
  And open flowers along the granite blew
Unwitheringly. On the arching wide
  Stood up the dial, bridging over quite
The narrow Norman street from side to side.
  Long distance down the street the dial white
By every passer-by might be espied,
  And looked exceeding picturesque and light.
In fact, there never was a plan projected
By which a clock could better be erected.

13

So, as I said before, past this we ran,
  (For, in this clime, when thunder-clouds come blowing,
Always retire as quickly as you can);
  Reached the hotel, and scarce had time to go in

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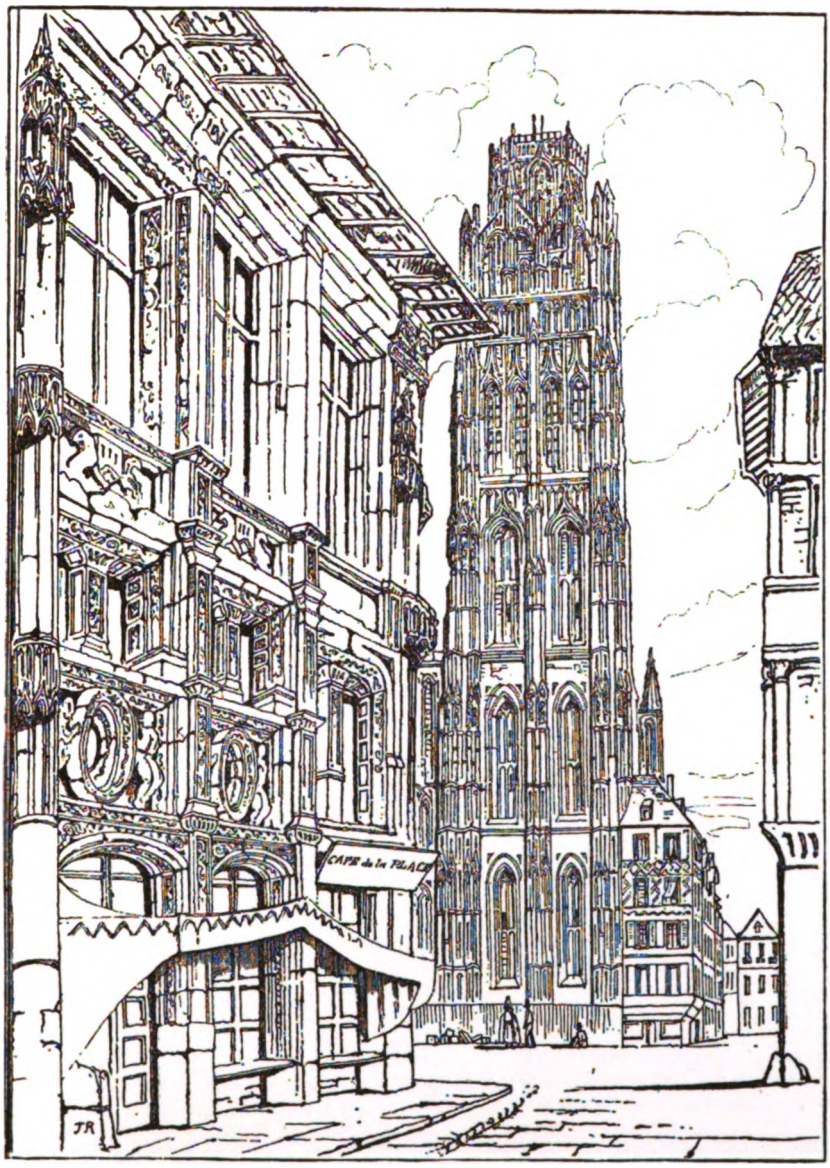

The Cathedral Spire, Rouen

1835

p. 400

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Before the thunder and the rain began;
So we sat at the window, and cried "Oh!" when
There came a brilliant flash along the sky.
We, from the next day's morn till day departed,
Went up and down in Rouen constantly;
Admired, and wondered that in every part it
Presented rich street-pictures to the eye.
And then we ordered horses, and we darted
Many a long look at beautiful St. Ouen,
Climbing a verdant hill, the last that looks on Rouen.[1]

14

St. Germain is a pleasant place to mope at—
Uninteresting as a place may be.
There's a fine view 'twould be as well to stop at
Near the old palace; and they say you see
Beyond the spires of Paris; and I hope that
It's true, but it is only an "*on dit.*"
When you've walked up the Rue la Paix at Paris,
Been to the Louvre, and the Tuileries,
And to Versailles, although to go so far is
A thing not quite consistent with your ease,
And—but the mass of objects quite a bar is
To my describing what the traveller sees.
You who have ever been to Paris, know:
And you who have not been to Paris,—go!

15

By Soissons, and by Rheims,—which is much spoken of;
There's very little in it to admire,—
The statues' heads [indeed] are not all broken off,—
The thing is well preserved, from porch to spire;
And clean and neat, which is a [welcome][2] token of
Good order here. But many spires are higher:
The carving is not rich, the Gothic heavy;
The statues miserable,—not a fold

[1] ["Of Rouen, and its cathedral, my saying remains yet to be said, if days be given me, in 'Our Fathers have told us.' The sight of them, and following journey up the Seine to Paris, and then to Soissons and Rheims, determined the first centre and circle of future life-work" (*Præterita*, i. ch. ix. § 182).]

[2] ["In lines 3 and 5 I have supplied words to fill out the metre, which, with the dactylic rhyme, needs 12 syllables. In stanza 17 (now 19), lines 2, 4, and 6, alteration is less called for, as the scant metre is hardly noticed till you come to line 6. In stanzas 23 and 24 (now 27 and 28), lines 2, 4, and 6 are all too short. This poem was never revised; there is only the one copy."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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Of drapery well-disposed in all the bevy
Of saints, and bishops, and archbishops old
That line the porches grey. But in the nave I
Stared at the windows, purple, blue, and gold:
And the perspective's wonderfully fine,
When you look down the long columnar line.[1]

16

So on by Chalons, where no lions are
Save four on the Hôtel de Ville, we past
Plains in abominable flatness far
Extending westward, till we dropped at last
Down in a hole upon the town of Bar.[2]
I love to see a streamlet flashing past
Down some still valley, in a sportive mood;
Where the winds come to bathe themselves, and sing,
And dip their breezy tresses in the flood.
'Tis sweet to stand and watch the quivering
Of wave-embarrassed beams, where pebbles strewed
Brightly along the bottom of the spring
Fling back and forward flashes—constant play
Of silver sunbeams that have lost their way.

17

Therefore we went along the river's bank
Shaded by many a broad tree, branching wide
Where the cool ripple made the borders dank.
And everywhere along the valley-side
The hill, upon its brown and sunburnt flank,
Bore full and verdant vineyards in the pride
Of fruitfulness. But though we hear a deal of
Italian vineyards, and the juice delightful

[1] ["By the 'carving' I meant the niche-work, which is indeed curiously rude at Rheims; by the 'Gothic' the structure and mouldings of arch, which I rightly call 'heavy' as compared with later French types; while the condemnation of the draperies meant that they were not the least like those either of Rubens or Roubilliac. And ten years had to pass over me before I knew better" (*Præterita*, ii. ch. vi. § 114).]

[2] [Bar-le-Duc, capital of the Department of La Meuse. In the prose diary of the Tour, Ruskin says under "Bar-le-Duc, June 21":—

"Walked about the environs of this beautiful village. The whole extent of the country from Rheims to Bar-le-Duc is a plain; an immense extent of level, but still of considerably elevated country. This is intersected by narrow valleys, whose richly cultivated meadows are two or three hundred feet below the level of the surrounding plains, and in these vallies (*sic*) are situated the principal towns and villages of this extensive district. To enter a village is here a phrase synonymous with 'to go down into a hole,' and to leave a town, with 'to go up a very steep hill.'"]

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Which Spanish peasantry make every meal of;
And though a glass looks pretty when 'tis quite full
Of sparkling wine; and though we like the feel of
A bunch of grapes just gathered with a slight pull;
And though the Grecian poets praised a foamer
Of wine, when they were thirsty (witness Homer);—

18

Yet, sir, you would by no means think it fun,
And all your fine romantic feelings fly off,
When you are stewed beneath a burning sun
Panting with heat which you are like to die of,—
The stones beneath you scorching, every one,—
The walls around you white and hot,—a sky of
Untempered, sultry, and continual blue,—
The air without a motion or a sound;—
'Twould put a salamander in a stew
To feel the dry reflection from the ground!
Vine, vine, still vine,—the only thing in view,—
All vine, monotonously roasting round!
'Twould make you cry, as up the hills you scramble,
"Oh, for an English hedge of shady bramble!"

19

From Bar-le-Duc we made a dash at Nancy,
Whose beautiful arcades we walked about.
Its buildings are, as any body can see,
By revolutionists much knocked about.
There are two fountains spouting on a plan we
Admired, and the triumphal arch is talked about.[1]
But if you wish to see a foreign town,
Look out for every narrow, dirty street,
As you walk diligently up and down;
Pop into it directly; you will meet
Such combinations,—houses tumbling down,—
Old fragments,—Gothic morsels, quite a treat,—
Columns and cloisters,—old *boutiques* which stink of
Garlic, and everything that you can think of!

20

Thus here, there's such a bit, in such a lane
A gate, with curious carved Gothic niches
Where statues were, but where they don't remain,
Those men of taste, those Gemmen without breeches

[1] [See note 2, on p. 401.]

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Considering all such monuments a stain
Upon their city, broke the statues, which is
A monstrous pity. Then the centre square
Is well designed, by numerous arches ended,
The gardens such as you see everywhere,
The church is tol lol, and its organ, splendid—
On carved wood work lifted up in air
High o'er the nave the branching oak is bended.
Thus we examined all things, high and low,
Then we left Nancy, to the southward, ho!

21

Long had I looked, and long I looked in vain
For the pale mountains in the distance showing.[1]
It was a hill that we had climbed: the plain
Beneath lay brightly, beautifully glowing.
Is it a cloud, that yon pale, azure chain
The whole, wide, low horizon round is throwing?
Oh no! the peaks are high on Jura's crest,—
The plains do worship to their distant might,
The clouds by day couch, drowsy, on their breast,
And the stars gleam along their flanks by night;
There comes the storm to dwell, the mist to rest;
There, like communing[2] spirits, from their height
They echo at the thunderbolt's behest,
That gleams[3] with lightning eye from east to west.

[1] ["At Bar-le-Duc I was brought again within the greater radius of the Alps, and my father was kind enough to go down by Plombières to Dijon, that I might approach them by the straightest pace of Jura," etc.: see *Præterita*, i. ch. ix. § 182. Plans for the tour of 1835 had been in Ruskin's head during the preceding year, as appears from a rhyming letter to his father under date Feb. 18, 1835. In this he had already begun to insinuate the attractions of the Jura route:—

"The way over Jura
By Dijon, et cetera,
I think is better far
Than to toil through the sand of the Netherland routes
With their Dutchmen (their cheeses) and Germans (the brutes).
What care we for Germany? leave her, oh, leave her!
We will dash down to Paris and jump on Geneva
By the road that shines white on the Jura so bare,
When you look from the house that remembers Voltaire,
And which sees from its height all the clouds that do wheel on
The mountains of Berne and the crest of Mont Velan."]

[2] [Misprinted "commencing" in the text of the ed. of 1891 (but corrected in a prefatory note to the illustrated edition.)]

[3] ["*Gleams* is a correction by the author's father,—the only one of its kind (in this poem),—for *looks*."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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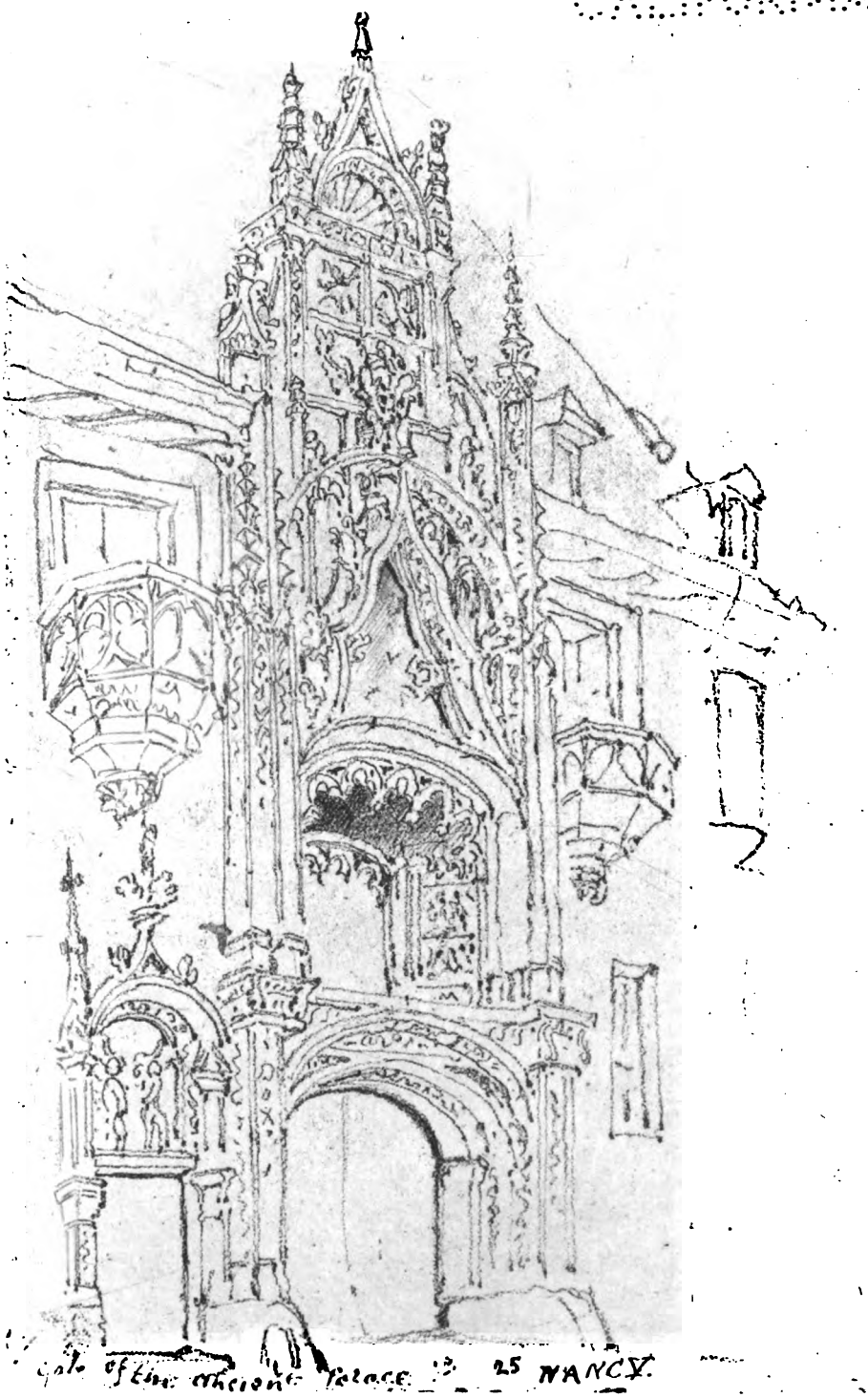

Gate of the ancient Palace, NANCY.
1835.

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22

We saw them all the way to Plombières,
Which is a pretty place; but it is not that
Which makes the crowds of invalids go there.
The springs are so abominably hot, that
They steam and bubble in the open air,
Which makes the place look like a boiling pot, that
Smokes from the valley. There the baths are seen,—
The water, through distilling drop by drop there,
Fills four [1] large tubs with liquid warm and green.
There sit the social invalids and pop their
Thin yellow noses out like lobsters lean
Boiling for dinner. Hour to hour they stop there,
Sleeping an[d] reading,—subjects lean and bony,
Engaging in a conversazione.

23

I'm on the Jura. Lo! the rocks are dun,
Although the opposite of heaven [is] [2] bright,
And all the glare of gaudy day [is] done;
And there is shadow mingled with the light.
The dazzled world is weary of the sun;
Her eyes are shaded by the hand of night.
Yet beautiful, oh! beautiful the beam
Along the azure of the plain [is] sleeping:
The distant hills are veiled as with a dream
Of mist, of dewy mist, their foreheads steeping.
The heaven is parting with the dying gleam,
And lo! the heaven is sad, the heaven is weeping.
The voice of streams is hushed [3] upon the hill;
No murmur from the plain, and all the world is still.

24

Farewell, ye plains; ye champaigns wide, farewell!
The cloud, the storm, the mountain now for me!
Mine be the deserts where the chamois dwell,
And the wild eagle soars at liberty!
For meditation on the pinnacle
Of the lone mountain sits, and loves to see
The beauty of the living solitude;
And music floats around; the mountain air
With a rich spirit of music is imbued;
And every sound becomes harmonious there;

[1] [Misprinted "from" in the text of the ed. of 1891 (but corrected in a prefatory note to the illustrated edition). The ed. of 1891 reads "or" for "and" in the last line but one of this stanza.]
[2] [So in the ed. of 1891; "was" in the MS.]
[3] [The ed. of 1891 reads "heard."]

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The streamlet's plash, the thunder of the flood,
The flock's low tinkle o'er the pastures bare,
And the long roar and echo never ending
Of distant avalanches terrible descending.

25

This isn't humbug; no, you feel quite odd when
You climb an elevation hugely high;
Step after step goes hop upon the sod then,
Lightly as if you were about to fly;
Mile after mile with merry heart is trod then,
Enjoying all things with unwearied eye.
Then you feel hungry, eat a double ration
Of viands, don't despise your what you call it,
It is a member of imagination,
And of much sentiment, and, after all, it
Is pleasant in romantic situation
To fall upon your dinner or forestall it
With half-a-dozen breakfasts, rolls and eggs
To vivify your mind, and fortify your legs.

26

So, on the heights of Jura, as I said,
I stood, admiring much the setting sun
Taking a bath before he went to bed
Out of the mists, that, indistinct and dun,
And dark, and grey, and colourless as lead
Along the horizon's farthest outline run
Like velvet cushions for his weary head;
Or like a sort of scene, for him to slip off
Behind: and a long line of ruby red
Zigzag'd along their summits, like a strip of
Dutch gold upon a piece of gingerbread
After the happy urchin's gnawed the tip off
The finger, after long deliberation
Between his appetite and admiration.

27

So, on the heights of Jura, as I said,
I stood, and rocks around in quantities,—
In cliffs quite high enough to turn your head,
And make you cry "how very grand it is!"
Especially after coming through the dead
And stupid plains of France, where scant it is[1]

[1] [See note 2, on p. 401.]

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Of beauty, and monotonously low.
These are those famous rocks by which the stone-
Examiners have all been puzzled so.
For here and there the granite blocks are strown
Over the bending mountain's softer brow;
And some affirm that here they have been thrown
By mighty floods, quite large enough to heave a
Mountain across the valley of Geneva!

28

When o'er the world the conquering deluge ran,[1]
Rolling its monster surges, far and wide,
O'er many an ancient mountain's lordly[2] span,
And when upon the all devouring tide
Wallowed the bulk of the leviathan
Where cultivated plains are now descried;[3]
And when the toppling peaks of mountains old
Were shook from their foundations into ruin,
Like shingle at the ocean's mercy rolled,
That worked, and worked,—ever its work undoing,—
Heaping up hills beneath its bosom cold,
Then wide again the devastation strewing,—
Then the dark waves, with nothing to obstruct 'em,
Carried these blocks from far, and here it chucked 'em!

29

Such are the dreams of the geologist!
He sees past ages of the world arise;
Strange sounds salute his ears, prepared to list,
And wondrous sights, his rock inspired eyes.
Before him solid mountains wave and twist,
And forms of life within them fossilize;
The flint invades each member as it dies,
And through the quivering corse on creeps the stone,
Till in the mountain's hardened heart it lies,
In nature, rock,—in form, a skeleton;
Much for the feature valued by the wise,
Or in some huge museum to be shown,—
A mystery, as wonderful, at least,
As that of apples conjured into paste![4]

[1] ["Geologists must remember that in 1835 diluvian theories were still in vogue." *Editor's Note*, 1891.]
[2] [The ed. of 1891 reads "lofty."]
[3] [See note 2, on p. 401.]
[4] [Ruskin was fond in after years of making experiments in this sort to illustrate geological points; see *Deucalion*, i. "of Ice-Cream" (§ 17,) "of Butter and Honey" (§ 13).]

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30

Thus on the Jura dreamed I, with nice touch
Discriminating stones; till, which was teasing,
The evening mists rolled round, with dampness such,
That, though they brought a coolness not unpleasing,
They made me sneeze! Now, nothing half so much
Disturbs a person's sentiment as sneezing:
It takes you impudently by the nose;
Throws your component parts into confusion;
And shakes you up, as doctors shake a dose
In which they've put some villainous infusion;
And the shrill echo in at both ears goes
With such a sharp and [1] startling an intrusion,
Like a fell thunder clap by tempest brought,
Breaking the deep, still silence of your thought.

31

And so I wished myself good luck, you know,
As many people do on like occasion:—
The Swiss takes off his hat with a low bow
To you, though in the midst of conversation;
And if you've caught a little cold or so,
You keep your friend just in the situation
Of the caparisoned dragoon, with sword on
His side, well carved in wood, with wooden steed,
Placed the extremest limit of a board on:
Still up and down he goes, by ball of lead
Which slowly swings beneath him, ever spurred on:—
Thus at each sneeze your friend still bows his head;
In fact, the courteous Swiss puts off and on his
Hat, like a master of the ceremonies.

32

A mountain walk by moonlight, people say,
Is interesting and poetical.
Some like to walk while twilight wastes away;
Some choose to be a peripatetic all
Night, and a very Stoic during day.
I am not given to be ecstatical
When I can't see, and therefore I descended;
Although the night that came was scarcely night,—
So softly with the air was starlight blended,
Like the sea's phosphor lustre, coldly bright;

[1] ["So" in the ed. of 1891.]

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The peaks above me, as I downward wended,
Grew misty in the ray so faint and white;
You could have thought, as, veil-like, you did view them,
That the moonbeams were shining through and through them.

33

O redly broke the morn, and Jura smiled,
And all the plains awoke them from their slumber.
The morn! the morn! I heard along the wild
The torrents shouting with a voice of thunder.
Under the cliffs fantastically piled
We wound and left the city couching under:
Up on the mountain where the breeze is free,
Up on the mountain where the wild flowers grow,
Up on the mountain where with melody
The cataracts sing and tempests loudly blow,
Up on the mountain, where quick rushing by
Leaps like a lion the lavange,[1] we go.
Farewell, ye plains, the rocks around I see,
The cloud, the storm, the mountain now for me!

34

Thus did we leave Poligny, and to Morez
We went, which is an odd place in a hole,
Under huge cliffs built in successive stories
Of limestone, very pretty on the whole,
Swiss-ish, and picturesque, and so on: nor is
It far from the green summit of the Dôle
Which groves of tall and spiry pine embrace,
Which[2] like a mantle of the deepest green,
Shadow its sides and darken round its base:
But grassily doth rise its crest; between
Its ridges and in every sheltered place
The wavy lines of whitest snow are seen:
Through the first summer months it wears them yet,
Like a large emerald in silver set.

35

Reader, if you are trigonome——, no! I
Can't manage that long word, which is a bother;—
Trigonometrical, I'll tell you how high
It is above the Medi——, there's another!—
Mediterranean; and that will show why
The snow, although it melts some time or other,

[1] [*Lavange*, French synonym for *avalanche*.]
[2] ["And" in the ed. of 1891, which in the first line reads "then" for "thus."]

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Continues there so long. I've calculated
It is [five] thousand and [five] hundred feet[1]
Above the sea: a summit, insulated
So high, is seldom subject to much heat,
And therefore, as above I have related,
Although the sun's rays may appear to beat
Warmly upon the grass with tow'ring glow,
They cannot melt the hard heart of the snow.[2]

36

And when the day is hot, at two o'clock,
And trees and flowers are loaded with the heat,
And walnuts tall give shelter to the flock
That crowds[3] beneath their branches, then 'tis sweet
To seek the shadow of some lofty rock
With a cool streamlet gurgling at your feet;
And when you've scaped the power and the might
Of the fierce sun, and coolness fills your breast,
Then, to look up to some enormous height
Where winter sits for ever, and whose crest
Is lovely with the kisses of the light,—
The ruby light that loves on it to rest,
And to feel breezes o'er your features blown, is
Like eating raspberry ices at Tortoni's![4]

37

The meadows of these hills are like the robe,
Bedight with gems, of some high emperor:
There's not a spot in all this lovely globe
That's more abundant in its flowery store.
The Alpine rose along its ridges glowed,
The mountains burning with the fiery flower.
Queen of the blossoms in the fields below,
The silver lily lifted its pale head,
The emulation of the mountain snow.
Fresh emerald moss along the rocks was spread,
And hare bells trembling as the breezes blow,
And many another flower, of blue and red,
Purple and gold, too numerous to mention,
Half-drowned in dew, solicited attention.

[1] [The Dôle is 5505 feet above the sea. The MS. reads, "It is 3000 and 900 (? 300) feet"—an obvious clerical error, as 3900—still less 3300—feet do not nearly reach the snow-level.]

[2] [In the prose diary Ruskin goes at some length into this matter, making computations into the height of the perpetual snow-line, etc.]

[3] [So in the MS. The ed. of 1891 reads "cowers."]

[4] [The fashionable café in the Boulevard des Italiens, Paris.]

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38

—Attention difficult to give, when we
Saw such a scene of loveliness around;
Yet 'twas not much amiss to stoop, and see
The beauty of that flower enamelled ground:
First, to behold the mountain's majesty,
Then, the fresh green of yonder mossy mound.
As when you enter some enormous pile—
Gothic cathedral very ancient,
First, you admire what people call the style
And massive wholeness of the monument,—
Magnificent effect of dome and aisle,—
And next, you view the lavish ornament
That's carved on every part, but all intended
To make the general effect more splendid.

39

Thus on the Jura did we gaze, beholding
A monument enormous everywhere:
The hills, that on their shoulders seemed upholding
The high blue dome that looked above the air;
Groves of dark pines their scarped crags enfolding;
Rocks raised like castles from their summits bare,
In many a varied form: and then did look
At the most rich and intricate detail;
The coloured marks in yonder marble rock,—
The green moss that hangs o'er it like a veil,—
The turf inlaid with flowers,—the crystal brook
That ever tells its never varied tale
Unto the air, that sporteth with its spray,
And sings, and sings, [and sings][1] to it all day.

40

Give me a broken rock, a little moss,
A barberry tree with fixed branches clinging,—
A stream that clearly at its bottom shows
The polished pebbles with its ripples ringing;—
These to be placed at nature's sweet dispose,
And decked with grass and flowers of her bringing;—
And I would ask no more; for I would dream
Of greater things associated with these,—
Would see a mighty river in my stream,
And, in my rock, a mountain clothed with trees.

[1] [Thus in the ed. of 1891; space left blank in the MS.]

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For nature's work is lovely to be seen;
Her finished part as finished whole will please;
And this should be a mountain-scene to me—
My broken rock, my stream, and barberry tree.[1]

41

I'm going to turn a corner,—which I've done
A hundred or a thousand times before!
But this is really a distinguished one,
And needs a little preparation, for
The shock of it is quite enough to stun
You, like a box upon the ear, and floor
Your very feelings, that you will not move
A muscle of your body, nor will dare
To breathe the breezes that about you rove.
You could chastise the movement of the air
While drinking in the beauty that you love!
Some cannot that delicious rapture share;
Those who feel little, talk, and rant, and vapour,
Kick up their heels, prance, frisk, curvet, and caper.

42

Mighty Mont Blanc, thou hast been with me still
Wherever I have been! In the dark night
I've walked upon thy visionary hill,
And have been filled with infinite delight:
And when I woke, it was against my will.
Though then I did not have thee in my sight,
Still wert thou like a guiding star, and all
My hope was to be with thee once again,
Hearing thy avalanches' fearful fall.
I was bound to thee by a pleasant chain,
And I am here in answer to thy call!
I see thee rise o'er yonder lordly plain,
Like nothing else i' the world; for thou hast stood
Unrivalled still, thine own similitude![2]

[1] [With the idea expressed in this stanza, see *The Poetry of Architecture*, § 54, and the passage in *Modern Painters* there cited (Vol. I. p. 48 *n*).]

[2] [In the prose diary (Poligny, June 29) we read:—

"The hills became more peaked and more sprinkled with snow as we advanced, until after passing along an immense gallery, high upon the precipices of the Dôle, we turned that illustrious corner that looks across the broad and beautiful valley of Geneva to the eternal ramparts of Italy, to the 'redoubtables aiguilles' and glittering ætherial elevation of Mont Blanc. I have seen no view of it equal to this. I believe the Brevent is a little too near. Sallanche is grand; Chamouni shows nothing of the height of Mont Blanc, which is quite foreshortened when you look from such a near valley. No station shows the height and sublimity of the Alps so well as an elevation of 2000 or 3000 feet at a distance of about 80 or 60 miles, especially if you get a good sunset."

"I have never seen that view perfectly but once," said Ruskin in *Præterita*, "in this year, 1835" (see i. ch. ix. § 194).]

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43

Nobly the hills are set on Leman's shore,
  Like to a dark and most tempestuous deep
Petrified into mountain; and the power
  Of silence on the lake laid it asleep
In the arms of the mountains, evermore
  Embracing it. Down, down the torrents leap
In[to] the calm waters, with a rush immense,
  Like headlong passion which appeased is straight
When it is met by gentle patience.
  And on the other side, in purple state
The plains spread out their broad magnificence,
  And gorgeous[1] enrobed, and all elate
With corn, and vine, and forests deeply green:—
It was a lovely sight and beauteous to be seen!

44

The Alps! the Alps! though in the lap of night,
  Lit by the lightening,[2] silvered by the moon,
Or purple with the evening's beacon bright,
  Or blazing in the fiery glance of noon,
Or shivering in the morning's colder light,
  Or veiled in tempest and in cloudy gloom.
Still are they noble, as the monarch is,
  Whether he wraps himself around in wrath
Or with benignity do[th] charge his eyes,
  Joying all those who wait upon his path.
I see them far: their battlements arise,
  And lightenings from their glaciers go forth,
Blinding as if a chain of suns were there,
Burning and dazzling all the ambient air.

45

Now down the hill we heard our carriage roll,
  In our enthusiasm sent away.
—Enthusiasm is a parasol
  When the sun's hot; and on a rainy day
As [an][3] umbrella doth the rain control:—
  A carriage, on a long and weary way,—
A cloak when it is cold,—a fan in heat,—
  Patience when you are out of patience.—Oh!
Down the hillside with still delaying feet
  How merrily and lightly did we go!

[1] [The ed. of 1891 reads "gorgeously," but the author presumably meant "gorgeous" to make three syllables. Five lines above the MS. has "into" apparently altered to "in."

[2] [Ruskin often spells "lightning" with an "e" in his *juvenilia*.]

[3] [So in the ed. of 1891. The MS. omits the word, the following word being presumably expected to make four syllables.]

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Although the sun did fiercely on us beat,
And though it was some seven miles or so,
Our hearts were merry, and our limbs elastic,
Only because we were enthusiastic!

46

Thus we went down the Jura, and before
Our road had led us a long way past Gex, it
Showed us the villa, beautiful no more,
—Voltaire's,—and the low, humble chapel next it,
With this inscription placed above the door
Conspicuous, *Deo Voltaire erexit*,—
Which reads a little oddish! This we past;
The hills increasing, nearer as we drew,
Till fair Geneva raised its spires at last,
Sitting beside the waters bright and blue,
On which, though trembling with the noontide blast,
Mont Blanc from far his silver image threw;
And, nearer us, the waters did receive a
Clear image of the city of Geneva.

47

Geneva is a rather curious town,
And few its public edifices are. How
The streets upon each side come sloping down,
Too steep for carriages, and rather narrow.
It has two bridges o'er the double Rhone,
Which darts beneath as swiftly as an arrow:
Forth from the lake it comes, with swirl and sweep,
Fed by the distant glaciers on high—
The reservoirs that hang on every steep—
And giddily the billows dance you by.
Thirty or forty feet the stream is deep;
Strong as a giant; azure as the sky;
And clear and swift as a tempestuous wind they go,
And very like a painter's pot of indigo.

48

Many a philosopher has scratched his pate,
Pronouncing it incomprehensible,
While standing on that bridge, and looking at
The waters passing by with ceaseless swell,
So richly, so intensely azure, that
You could imagine,—ay, and very well,
That heaven 'neath the sun's excessive ray
Was melting! All the pebbles may be counted

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Thirty feet down, it is so clear; some say
That even from the river's icy fount it
Preserves its azure colour all the way.
—By this, the circumstance is not accounted
For,—that green (like the sea-green beard of Neptune)
Is nothing but an optical deception.[1]

49

In fact, it cannot be accounted for;
And nothing on the subject can be said!
There is no reason for it, any more
Than that a cherry should be white or red,
Or a plum blue. On all Lake Leman's shore
The waves beat bluely, save just at its head,
Where the Rhone rushes from its glacier-fountains,
It is a little turbid; that's no matter,—
Only a little granite from the mountains,
Which torrents wear and tear, and lightnings shatter.
The river is soon cleared, nor far around stains
The purity of Leman's crystal water.
I'd say 'twas like a sapphire,—but I've more
Than once used that similitude before!

50

The scenery about Geneva's rich.
On one side is the Jura, blue and bare;
Opposite, is a valley, out of which
From huge Mont Blanc and tall Argentière
Rushes the Arve, as dirty as a ditch.
And if you ask for it, they'll take you where
The river, in romantic situation
Between high banks of gravel, gushes down,
By its most foul evil communication
Corrupting the good manners of the Rhone,
Which holds aloof from all the perturbation
Of its foul neighbour, and goes down alone.
Some time it so continues: long it can't,—
Which I could moralise upon, but shan't.

51

And in this valley which I have just spoken of
Appears Mont Blanc, with silver summits three,
Whose wavy, domelike outlines,[2] broken off
Into aiguilles, which by his side you see

[1] [See the "Enquiries on the Causes of the Colour of the Water of the Rhine," in Vol. I. p. 191.]

[2] [The ed. of 1891 here inserts the word "finish," and two lines further on the words "and rent" after crushed. No such words occur in the MS.]

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Splintered, and crushed,—a direful token of
  Ancient convulsions of their majesty.
There is Jorasse, Midi, and spiry Dru,
  And the Géant, and high Argentière:
And dark and scowlingly they look at you.
  There's not a spot of vegetation there—
Even where the hand of winter cannot strew
  Snows on the sides, so splintered and so bare,
With granite points upon their rugged flanks,
Like spears of the archangels' military ranks.

52

But on your left a softer scene appears,
  Where the lake spreads out its metallic glow.
No mountain there its scraggy outline rears,
  But all is peaceful,—beautifully so!
Some little bark in distance fades, or nears
  With forked canvass flitting to and fro
Over the dimples of its polished face.
  Many a field and many a garden gay
Bedeck the Voirons' gently sloping base;
  At these you look and wonder, day by day,
So that Geneva is a pleasant place
  Whereat to make a week's or fortnight's stay,
To rest and to enjoy yourself at; and to
End a long journey, and a tiresome canto.

CANTO II

1

You who are tired of journeying with me
  May stick here if you like, nor read my rhyme.
You who desire a few more sights to see,
  Cities more splendid, scenery more sublime,
Come on, I'm going to start, and instantly—
  No stopping, no delaying, I've no time.
I will invoke no muses: I can do
  Without 'em, and my Pegasus goes first;
I'm not upon Parnassus, it is true,
  But soon midst higher mountains shall be lost.

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And, gentle reader, I will carry you
Where upon frozen ocean's Alpine coast
Are streams as sweet as any Heliconian,
Fit to inspire the soul of a Maronian.[1]

2

We left Geneva. 'Tis against the grain
From such a lovely place yourself to sever,
Knowing that you will not be there again
For a long time at least,—and perhaps never.
I must confess I crossed the bridge with pain,
The bridge that arches o'er a rushing river.
But up my heart leaped with a bound once more
When, full in front, increasing as we went,
The ancient mountain stood, with glaciers hoar.
And entering the valley, which is rent
Between the Môle and Brezon (I before
Have spoken of it[2]), I grew quite content,
And ceased to sigh, though I no more could see of
Geneva's spires, which there are two or three of.

3

Our road fast brings us nearer to the Môle,
And we shall pass beneath it presently.
The Môle—now don't confuse it with the Dôle,—
There is a difference between M and D—
The Môle, I say, sir, is upon the whole
A lovely mountain as you'd wish to see.
Those who for height alone inclined to stickle are
May say that it is nothing of a height;[3]
[Six] thousand feet, or something, perpendicular:
That's quite contemptible!—and they are right!
But I[4] am not at all particular,
So that a mountain's aspect please the sight;
And even to look up so high makes one feel
Stiff i' the neck, from such a place as Bonneville.

4

They told me things about the Môle, on which
I was incredulous, and quite refractory.
They said 'twas shaped exactly like the ridge
Of some spare, lean old gentleman's olfactory—

[1] [This stanza is omitted in the ed. of 1891. "Maronian," a Virgilian.]
[2] [Above, Canto I., stanza 50.]
[3] ["The Môle is 6125 feet above the sea, and 4665 above Bonneville: the Brezon is 6142 feet above the sea, and 4682 above Bonneville."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. In the next line the MS. reads "3000 feet."]
[4] [The ed. of 1891 here inserts "myself."]

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A sharp and regular and well-formed ridge,
You scarcely could believe the fact, nor I.
Seen from Geneva, 'tis a pyramid,
Sharp, high, and pointed, for beheld from thence
Its back by its extremity is hid.
But here the ridge is lengthened and immense,
Furrowed by avalanches, which have slid
Down its steep sides, and with magnificence
Of verdure robed; indeed, there's not a spot on
Its sloping flanks of snow from top to bottom.

5

And on the other side appears the Brezon,[1]
A lofty precipice of limestone hoar.
Monsieur Saussure, who used to lay much stress on
Necessity of practising, before
You venture into danger (and with reason),
Used to climb up, and poke his numskull o'er
Couched on his breast,—a ticklish situation
For those who are not thorough mountain bred!
Oh, Shakespeare! when the paltry elevation
Of Dover's promontory filled thy head
With dizziness and instant inspiration,—
Oh, Master Shakespeare, what would'st thou have said
If, 'stead of poor four hundred, as at Dover
Thou hadst looked down four thousand feet, and over?

6

Tell me of crows and choughs,—a pretty thing!
Why, man, you could not see a flying cow
A quarter down!—or samphire gatherer swing,—
Such nonsense!—here were room and height enow
To hang a dozen of 'em in a string,
Nor see the topmost from the mountain's brow.
"Not leap aloft[2] for all beneath the moon?"
—No, nor leap backward from the verge of fear
For all beneath the shine of stars or sun.
"Not hear the sea?"[3] why, here you could not hear

[1] [A mountain with which Ruskin was in after years to have much to do: see *Præterita*, ii. ch. xi.]

[2] "Upright" in the ed. of 1891.]

[3] [*Edgar.* Hark! do you hear the sea?
Gloucester. No, truly. . . .
Edgar. The crows and choughs, that wing the midway air,
Show scarce so gross as beetles. Half-way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire,—dreadful trade! . . .
You are now within a foot of the extreme verge;
For all beneath the moon I would not leap
Upright. (*King Lear*, IV. v.).—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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The echo of the chamois hunter's gun
  Fired at the bottom of the cliff so sheer!
The vallies lying in the mountain's lap
Look like a pretty little pocket-map!

7

Onward we went; and as we went, the cloud
  Fretted the sunny sky with silver white,
Like Gothic carving on a temple proud;
  Pale at the first, and shadowy, and light;
Then darker and distincter, like a shroud
  Stooped upon each surrounding wintry height.
For these, where'er in heaven the clouds are tost,[1]
  Do gather them together, and wrap over
Their naked sides, all comfortless with frost.
  Above us, wreathed like smoke the cloudy cover,
And half-way down the higher hills were lost;
  But here and there by chance you might discover
A spire of ice, incredibly on high,
Start like a meteor through the misty sky.

8

Onward we went, in—what's the name of it?—I
  Really don't know if it has any name,
The vale 'twixt Cluse and Bonneville, which looks pretty
  At summer's early glow; though at the same
Time it is liable—which is a pity—
  To the attacks of water, wind, and flame.
You ask, at its wild beauty wondering,
  How can the place be such a flat as to
Permit the Arve its turbid waves to fling
  Over its greenest fields, and to renew
An annual devastation? till some king[2]
  (A monument's built to him) passing through
Bonneville (just at the bridge-end mark you it?)
"*Aggeribus haec flumina coercuit.*"

9

But when the fierce and unrelenting heat
  Of summer doth oppress the weary stream,
Along the hills the rays, all burning, beat,
  And the hot valley pants beneath the beam.
The glowing soil beneath you fires your feet
  And tires your eyesight with an arid gleam.

[1] [So in the MS.; the ed. of 1891 reads "lost."
[2] ["Charles Felix of Sardinia."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

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Once,—'twas a marvellous and fearful thing,—
The trees took fire beneath the glowing soil;
Wide Conflagration spread his purple wing:
Vainly the frighted peasants pant and toil,
Vainly dig channels for the crystal spring;—
The helpless waters in their channel [boil],[1]
And a red Autumn in an instant came,
And Nature withered 'neath her glance of flame.

10

But when, in furry robe of whitest snow,
The Winter spreads his desolate dominion,
Forth come the winds, and loudly do they blow,
And, like an eagle poised on threatening pinion,
Swoop in wide circles round the plain below.
And when a tempest once begins within one
Of these low mountain-vallies, many a tree
That long firm-rooted in their earth have stood
Bow their old heads[2] before it painfully;
And all the plain, obscured with hoary wood,
Undulates like the variable sea:
The very river backward rolls his flood,
Shakes the far mountains with his echoing roar,—
Heaves his white crest on high, and deluges his shore.

11

And now the bridge of Cluse is gained and past:
Sharp turns the road to enter the ravine
Cloven in the hills as by some weapon vast.
The river takes his rushing path between;—
I would not be the Arve, to fly so fast
Through the variety of such a scene!
From side to side, from crag to crag rebounding,
Sheeted with foam, as is the spurred war-horse,
So leaps the river, that the rocks around him[3]
Are formed and chiselled by his constant force.
With bursting echoes quake the cliffs resounding,
No deepness stills, no barrier checks his course;
On, ever on, the maddened billows sweep,—
Rest in no pool, nor by their border sleep.

[1] [Thus corrected in the ed. of 1891; the MS. has "came."]
[2] [The ed. of 1891 corrects to "has stood Bow his old head," and in line 2 of this stanza reads "her" for "his."]
[3] [So in the MS.; the ed. of 1891 reads "surrounding."]

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12

The castellated cliffs stand o'er your head
Broken, as is the war worn battlement.
But, as if its defenders were not fled,
Bristle the pines above their summits rent
Like a well-ordered army. Bare and red
Gleam their high flanks, and beautifully blent
Are moss, and turf, and crag, wet with the spray
Of yon aërial stream, which long ago
We saw in distance glittering down, and gay
With its broad, beautiful, perpetual bow
Belted about its column, as the ray
Shoots through the dissipated drops below,
Like dew descending, or soft April showers
Bathing in sunshine the delighted flowers.[1]

13

Oh, gently sinks the eve, and red [doth][2] set
The sun above Sallenches' mountains blue;
Like regal robes, the purple clouds beset
Mont Blanc; but on his crest, still breaking through,
The last bright western rays are lingering yet,
And the white snow glows with a rosy hue.
And now it fades, and now is past away;
The highest dome among the stars is white;
It seems to wake, and watch the night away[3]
And kindle at the first gleam of the light,—
A mighty beacon, to proclaim the day,
A beacon fit to meet the gladdened sight
Of half the world, from Gallia's plains of vine
Unto the distant ridge of the blue Apennine.

14

The morning came; delightful was the weather.
Up to the door with rattling rumble daundered
Those very strange compounds of wood and leather:—
Oh, *char-à-banc*, thou vehicle most honoured
Of all the vehicles e'er put together!
What though thy cushions be to sit upon hard,
And though they scarce can hold their well-squeezed three,
And though thou lookest ancient, worn and brown,

[1] [The waterfall of Nant d'Arpenaz.]
[2] [So corrected in the ed. of 1891; the MS. has "and redly set."]
[3] [So in the MS; the ed. of 1891 has "decay."]

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What coach and chariot can compete with thee,
That knead the mud of Pall-Mall up and down,
Or traverse and re-traverse constantly
The loud monotony of London town,
With gilded panels, arms upon the door,
Footmen behind and coachmen cocked before?

15

I love to see, with stately gait advancing,
The city coach, that vehicle historical,
With golden glare the vulgar eyes entrancing!
I love to see the darting gig or curricle,
With pawing greys and harness brightly glancing!
I love to see, with swiftness meteorical,
The mail coach spurn the dust like clouds behind,—
Eyes watching for it, expectation strung,
When "Troo, taroo, turuw!" comes on the wind!
I love to see a chariot float along
On softest springs for luxury designed,
Yieldingly firm, and delicately strong,—
With whirling wheel divide the lagging air,—
Steeds pant, dogs bark, boys shout, and rustics stare!

16

But thou, of all to me the sweetest sight,
Made for the mountain, servant of the hill,
Contemner of bad roads, who tak'st delight
In crushing rock and stone, be with me still,
Friend of my wearied limb, for visions bright
Rise on me when I see thee; by the rill,
The river, and the precipice I've past
Safely and most delightfully in thee!
—Thus thought I, while around me progressed fast
Bustling and packing:—"Where could that thing be?
And where could this have got to?"—till at last
The things must be tied on, and steadily
Some twenty minutes were at last allotted
Ere the last cord was stretched, and tightly knotted.

17

For the interior—how we could pack into
So small a space so many things, I can't tell:
Baskets, and covered things that bore one's back into
Boxes and bundles,—everything one can't well

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Want, or may possibly require: twines cracking, too,
  Things tumbling down because they cannot stand well:—
And "tie that there," and then, "tie that thing to it,
  And tie this on the top of them; and that thing
Must go between your legs;—ay, so you'll do it;—
  And this behind your back, it is a flat thing;
This on your knee."—No, thank ye; I'll give you it!—
  "This in your pocket."—How that bottle's rattling!
"Dear me, it's loose; how lucky you have spoken!"
Smash! "That's the tumbler; hope it is not broken!"

18

We'd sixteen miles to go, or thereabout.
  That, among hills, is something appetising.
Hadst seen us, you'd have said, I make no doubt,
  Our provend preparation was surprising:
With lemonade (you cannot get brown stout,
  The creamy bubbles through its crystal rising),
Bottles of wine and brandy, butter, bread,
  Cheese of the finest,—cream and rich Gruyère;
Strawberry jam upon our crusts to spread,
  And many a purple plum, and golden pear,
And polished apples, blushing rosy red;
  Ham, beef, and bacon, slices rich and rare;—
We found our knives and dishes useful; you
On carrying them may find them useful too.

19

Thus from St. Martin's gate we made our start, I
  Following in the second *char-à-banc*.
Behind us in a third there came a party
  Who, dashing down for Italy point blank,
Here from their route had ventured to depart; we
  Found them agreeable, and free, and frank.[1]
There was a sort of middle-aged old lady,
  And a not very young young lady too;
A miss beginning to be sage and steady,
  And advice-giving, and her brother, who
Was younger, had a great deal in his head; he
  Knew Greek, French, Latin, had not time to dally in
What he left to the ladies—the Italian.

[1] [The second half of this stanza and the first of the next were omitted in the ed. of 1891, which in the first line reads "a" for "our."]

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20

Thus from St. Martin's gate we rolled away;
We found at first the motion rather tiring,
Loquacious we as crickets are, and gay,
Arranging, rearranging, and admiring.
Poking our heads this, that, and every way,
Murmuring and pushing, packing and perspiring.
The day was very hot, and quite a smotherer,
That makes one drowsy, which is very odd.
[Some of us,][1] who inclined to make a pother were,
Quite disturbed those who were inclined to nod
By playing at bopeep with those in t'other *char*,—
Popping behind the leathern curtains broad.
I was ashamed, and told them—"no more gammon! I
Think that a shocking way of going to Chamouni!"

21

There is a little and a quiet lake,[2]
And lovely are its waters, hardly seen,
Lying beneath the shelter of a brake,
Like the spring turf beneath its foliage green;
And where the sunbeams through the leavage break
They dive beneath its waters, with a sheen
Such as the moon sheds on the midnight deep,
When mermaids, issuing from their coral caves,
With shelly voices sing the seas to sleep,
And scatter wayward lustre o'er the waves.
Forth the stream issues with a hurried leap
Down its rock-girded channel, which it paves
With many a ball of alabaster white,
And marble gay, and crystal clear and bright:—

22

Not clearer than its waters, which receive
The image of Mont Blanc upon their breast,
Nor, with the motion of one ripple, heave
The quiet snow on his reversed crest,—
So beautiful the scene, you might believe
A limner, 'mid the fairies deemed the best,
Had painted it with natural colours fair,
And put the water o'er it for a glass,

[1] [So corrected in the ed. of 1891; the MS. has "Those."]
[2] [The Lac de Chède, now destroyed; see next note.]

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And framed it in, with fretwork rich and rare
Of jewel-flowers, and moss, and daisied grass.
How sweetly sounds the gurgle through the air
Of the cool, dancing streamlet, as you pass:
There is no music pleases you so truly
As gush of waters in the heat of July.

23

By slow degrees and winding pathway mounting,
Onward we went the ancient pines among;
By many a trickling stream and gushing fountain
O'er the rough bed of many a torrent strong,
Amid the wreck of Servoz' ruined mountain,[1]
So beautiful in ruins. Far along,
And up the ridge, amid whose granites grey
Struggles the Arve, you hear the constant cry
Of waters, though unseen they wind their way
A hundred fathom down. In front, on high
The glacier flashes in the noontide ray,
In the deep azure of the Alpine sky.
And now the ridge is won: rest, rest, and see
What lies beneath you now; for there is Chamouni!

24

Like the Elysian fields where rove the blest,
Though round them reaches the Tartarean wild,—
Thus lies the enchanted vale, and all that's best
Of spring and summer's lavished on their child.[2]
While, round the space where those green meadows rest,
Is mountain chaos, like a barrier, piled,

[1] [" 'L'aiguille de la Dérochée ou Dérotzia, à côté du col de ce nom. C'est de là que partit en 1751 le gigantesque éboulement, qui fit croire aux gens de la vallée de Servoz que la fin du monde approchait. D'autres, plus instruits, crurent qu'il s'était ouvert un volcan dans cette localité, et le savant Donati fut envoyé de Turin pour l'examiner, à ce que raconte de Saussure, *Voyages*, § 493. Des éboulements plus ou moins grands ne sont pas très-rares dans ces montagnes; ce fut l'un d'eux qui, en 1837, combla le petit lac de Chède, l'un des plus jolis endroits de la route de Genève à Chamonix' (Alphonse Favre, *Recherches*, II. § 418). The landslip of stanza 23 is therefore that which happened in 1751; and the lake, described in stanzas 21 and 22, was destroyed by another landslip only two years after Mr. Ruskin's visit."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. The old road kept to the right of the river, and ascended by Chède and Servoz; the new keeps to the left bank. Ruskin referred to the filling up of the lake, and gave a description of it—"to my mind the loveliest thing in Switzerland"—in *Modern Painters*, vol. i. pt. ii. sec. v. ch. iii. § 5 *n* (eds. 1 and 2 only). He referred again to "the filling up of the Lac de Chède by landslips from the Rochers des Fiz" in *Ethics of the Dust*, ch. x.]

[2] [Fifty-three years later Ruskin returned for the last time to "the enchanted vale," and wrote, "beneath the cloudless peace of the snows of Chamouni," the last words "of the book which their beauty inspired and their strength guided": see Epilogue (1888) to *Modern Painters* (vol. v.).]

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And Winter holds an undisputed reign;
The chilly fingered tempest winds that go
On waving wings along the hills amain
Shake not a blossom in the fields below;
And every sunbeam that, with effort vain,
Strikes on the cold and unrelenting snow,
Seeks the sweet covert of the sheltered plain,
And lies delighted upon flowers again.

25

The King of mountains, clothed in cloudy veil,
Asserts his rule upon the meadows green,
And lays his sceptre on the subject dale—
Sceptre of silver ice, whose spires were seen
And many a minaret of crystal pale
Rising above the pines with silver sheen.
Oh, beautiful, how beautiful to see
The summer sun on tower and bastion beaming,—
Their bases beaten by a frozen sea,—
The moveless foam upon its breakers gleaming;
And from a mighty portal constantly
A sparkling river through the valley streaming;
For here's the company of glaciers, that is
Supplying all the world with water, *gratis!*

26

Then we descended, through the valley going,
Till the small village in the front was seen
With its low spire conspicuously glowing,
(For here they cover all their spires with tin,
Which makes them sparkle in the distance, showing
Like diamond in gentleman's breast-pin).
Here there are several hotels; but which of them
May be the best, is difficult to say.
Accommodation may be found at each of them;
But don't believe those fellows on the way,—
They'll recommend the worst, if you trust speech of them!
The Union seems the largest and most gay;
Of which I'll give you an exact description,
Because it was the place of our reception.[1]

[1] [The history of the inns at Chamouni is told by W. A. B. Coolidge in his *Swiss Travels and Swiss Guide Books*, 1889, pp. 201–205.]

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27

The Union is a building large and strong,
And somewhat English; and its side is graced [1]
With triple row of windows broad and long;
But at its end are wooden galleries placed,
Well carved and ornamented all along:—
The Swiss in such things have a deal of taste.
And there the guides assemble, when the sun
Is red upon the mountains' topmost snow,
And all their labours of the day are done,
To smoke a sociable pipe or so,
Telling their feats of peril, one by one;
And happiest he who oftenest below
His foot hath trod that crest where none can stand
Save in a shadow of death, his life laid in his hand.

28

In the interior are lobbies three
Above each other, windows at each end,
From which—I will not tell you what you see
At present,—in a minute I intend
To take the panorama properly.
And in these passages I'd recommend
A walk for exercise in rainy weather,—
They are so long, they're quite a promenade.
I've tramped away in them for hours together,
And measured miles before I dreamed I had.
And in them there are pictures which are rather
Well executed, or at least not bad,
Of ibex, deer, and chamois, bisons, buffaloes,
Which those who hunt 'em say are rather tough fellows.

29

From this the bedrooms open, clean and neat,
Well furnished; and which often furnish you
With much amusement. It is quite a treat
When you have nothing in the world to do,
Close to the window oped to take your seat,
And feast upon the magic of the view.
I went to one; 'twas at the lobby-end,
Full opening on the gigantic hill,

[1] [The ed. of 1891 reads "sides are," and in line 9 "the" for "their."]

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Up went the casement: there I took my stand,
Stupidly of the scene to take my fill:
My head dropped somehow down upon my hand
Sleep-like; and I became exceeding still.
Sometimes, when such a glory you espy,
The body seems to sleep,—the soul goes to the eye.

30

The noonday clouds across the heaven were rolled,
With many a lengthened vista opening through,
Where many a gorgeous wave of white and gold

[*Here the MS. ends.*]

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[A LETTER FROM ABROAD][1]

PARIS, 14 *June*.

DEAR RICHARD,[2]

AT Paris, in the Rue la Paix,
Last Midsummer I sit reviewing;[3]
And think of you, now far away,
And wonder what you may be doing:—
If after church at school you stay,
Not yet come back from Wales;
Or if at Herne Hill glad and gay,
Returned from Doctor Dale's.
I love to write to you, and so,
Our journey hither well digesting
I write, altho' I hardly know
What may be chiefly interesting.
You'll guess the time went very slow
While I was being dosed[4] and stewed up,[5]
But then there was a pretty go
When I escaped from being mewed up!
The day was fine as day might be;
We cantered down to Canterbury;
Then on to Dover; crossed the sea;
Stopped, as we were not in a hurry,
At Calais; walked about to see
The Gothic steeple, and the people:
I sketched, in manner bold and free,
A sketch at which you'll like to peep well.

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 224–235. From MS. Book x.]

[2] ["Some six or seven gates down the hill, a pretty lawn, shaded by a low-spreading cedar, opened before an extremely neat and carefully kept house, where lived two people, modest in their ways as my father and mother themselves,—Mr. and Mrs. Fall. Their son, Richard, was a year younger than I, but already at school at Shrewsbury. . . . Richard Fall was entirely good-humoured, sensible, and practical; but had no particular tastes; a distaste, if anything, for *my* styles both of art and poetry. . . . We got gradually accustomed to be together, and far on into life were glad when any chance brought us together again" (*Præterita*, i. ch. viii. §§ 159–161).]

[3] [The "last midsummer" (1834), the two boys had spent together at Herne Hill.—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[4] [Misprinted "When I was being closed" in the ed. of 1891.]

[5] [During the illness and convalescence described in the note on p. 395.]

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Next morn was dark and thick[1] with rain;
But on the next we braved the weather.
Thinks I, "Oh, this is just the same,—
Their harness is as bad as ever!
Their horses still, in tail and mane,
Uncombed, unornamented brutes!"
But soon I saw, and saw with pain,
There was a falling off in boots!
And so to Rouen down we went,
By many a hill full gay and green;
The evening was magnificent;—
The noble city, like a Queen,
Sat in silence on the Seine
That here and there about was bent,
With islands bright his waves between,
Like an emerald ornament.

Hospice of Great St. Bernard: *July* 21, 9000 *ft. above sea.*

And there I sketched me sketches three,
Though Mr. Prout has nearly spent all!
Two of his pictures you may see
In the Annual Continental.[2]
Up to Paris next we went all,
Seeing many an English face;—
No wonder that they there are bent all!
'Tis a wondrous pleasant place.
On we went, enjoying rarely
Soissons, Rheims, and Bar, and Nancy,
—'Tis quite an itinerary;—
We saw all that people can see.
But nothing pleased so much my fancy
As when we went to Plombières;
—Far as the quickest eye could scan, we
Saw the Jura, blue and bare.
And now the sun is shining bright
On many a lofty crag of grey;

[1] [The words "dark" and "thick" were at first transposed in the MS. and are so read in the ed. of 1891, which eight lines lower reads "on" for "down."]

[2] [Two of Ruskin's sketches of Rouen made at this time are given, facing this page and p. 400. The reference to Prout is to *The Continental Annual and Romantic Cabinet for* 1832, with illustrations by Samuel Prout, edited by William Kennedy. Opposite p. 264 thereof is an engraving of Prout's drawing of Rouen Cathedral; Ruskin's sketches were obviously made in imitation of Prout's.]

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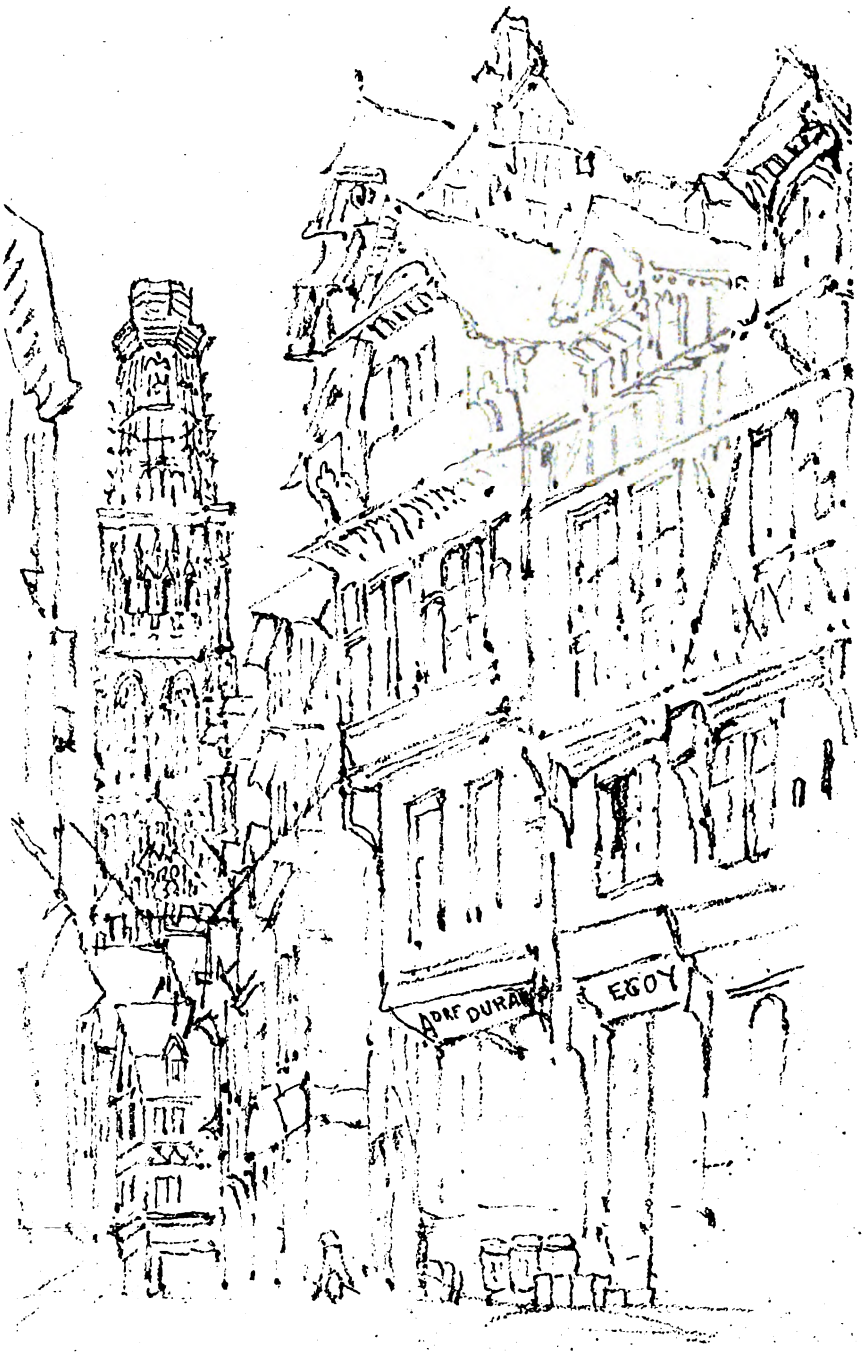

ROUEN.

1835.

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And sheets of deep snow, silver white,
Beating back the flashing ray.
Mont Velan in his white array
Looks o'er the little lake of blue,
Whose verdant waves transparent play
With ice and blue snow shining thro'.

SCHAFFHAUSEN, *5 Aug*t

The afternoon was clear and fair;
The sun shot warm along the snow;
The clearness of the mountain air
Like crystal gleamed, above, below.
And nearer drew the Velan's glow;
While on the mountain side were seen
Mosses most rich, of emerald green,
Sprinkled o'er with fairy show
Of Alpine flowers; you cannot think
How sapphire-like the gentian blue[1]
Mixed with stars of paly pink!
How humbly, and how low they grew
On every shadowy spot!
And I did think of home and you,
When from beneath a rock I drew
A young *forget-me-not*.
The dogs all out,—ay, every snout,—
Upon the snow they romped and rolled;
How they pulled each other about!
How the young did plague the old!
They can't bear heat, as we were told,
But love to feel the constant cold.
They welcome you, altho' they're mute,—
There's such a manner in the brute!

Aosta! oh, how thick it is
With buildings, ancient, strange and rare:
—I know you like antiquities;—
Full twelve feet thick of brick laid bare,
The ancient city-walls are there,
With a marble ornament
By the chisel sculptured fair.
Broadly are the arches bent;

[1] [For Ruskin's love of the Alpine gentian, see *Notes on the Turner Gallery at Marlborough House* (note on No. 477); *Modern Painters*, iii. ch. xii. § 2, ch. xiv. § 46; iv. ch. xx. § 5; v. pt. vi. ch. x. § 3.]

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Tho', as the facings are defaced,
The old inscription is replaced.[1]
It runs in French, to this intent:—
"Stranger, respect this monument!
Augustus Cæsar in the space
Of three short twelvemonths built this place,
And called it by his name. Pass on!"
An arch of most triumphal span
Is there, of brick as hard as stone,
With this inscription thereupon
—I give it you as best I can:—
"Rome, in many a weary fight
O'er the Salassians victorious,*
Built this arch, remembrance glorious
And memorial of her might."
Much were we pleased, you may be sure,
When we set off for Cormayeur;—
Fortresses arising round;
Rocks, with ruined castles crowned;
Vineyards green with trellised rail;
Villages in every vale:
Alps on high of granite grey
(Snow on every point appearing),
That, capped with cloud, seem far away,
Or vision-like, in heaven clearing.
Oh, the wild and [worn][2] array
Of the huge aiguilles you see,
Waiting on the majesty
Of their monarch! Oh, the gleam
Of his silver diadem!
With a thousand glaciers set
In his summer coronet:[3]
All the mountain's brow, they span it,
Barred about with spires of granite.
Avalanches, one and all,
Down they fall in what they call
—'Tis a sort of lonely valley

* *Anno urbis* 724.

[1] [Ruskin is here describing the Porta Prætoria (now called Porte de la Trinité), through which the road still passes. Aosta was captured by the Romans in 24 B.C., and rebuilt by Augustus. "It was the Augusta Prætoria Salassiorum of the Romans,—the Salassi being the old Gaulish inhabitants of the valley of the Duria, Doire."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[2] [This word was originally left blank in the MS.; it was inserted by the author in later years, perhaps when he was reading over the verses for *Præterita*.]

[3] [Ruskin used this figure in one of the best lines of "Salsette and Elephanta," ll. 270–271, p. 100, and see above, note on p. 94.]

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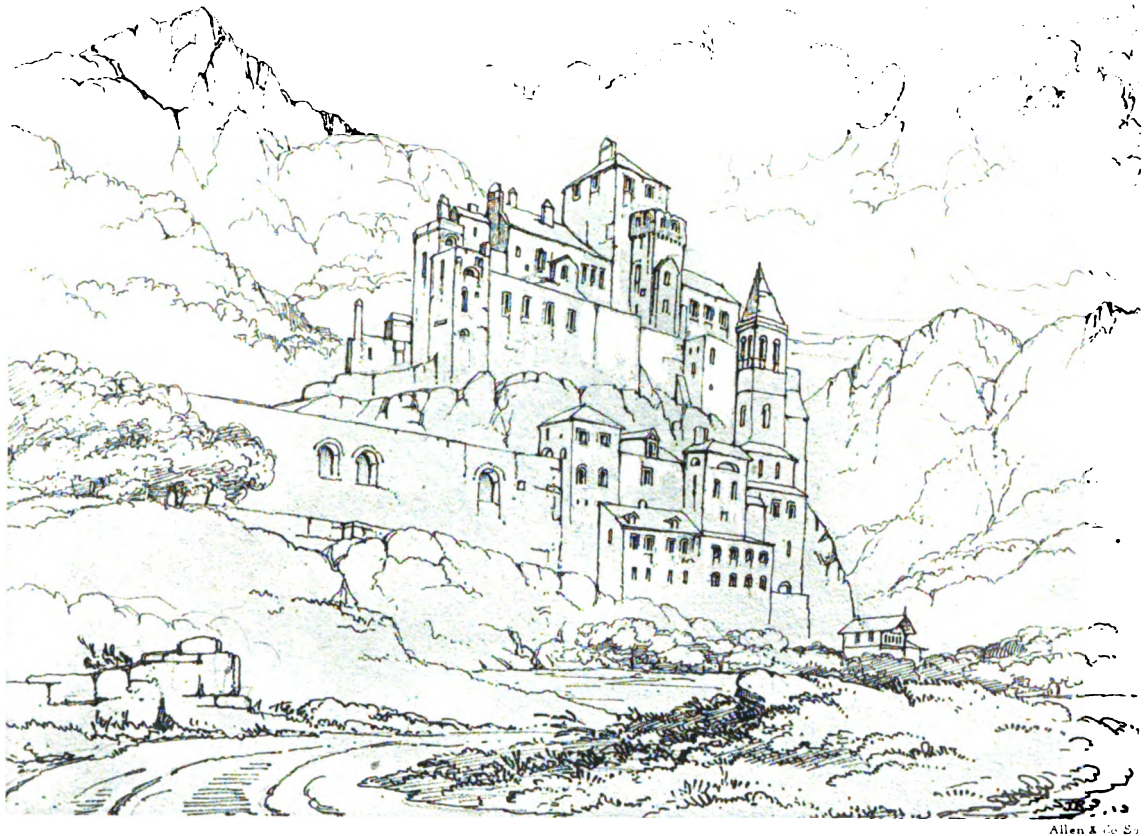

Fortress in the Val d'Aosta.
1835

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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Full of ice—which they call "Allée
Blanche," but blanche it an't at all![1]
Mont Blanc is lifted up on high
And shakes his snowy head into it;
Broken ice and granite strew it,—
'Tis confusion constantly.

Top of Righi.

I hope all this is entertaining!
I think, if lesson-time's gone by
And play-time come, and it is raining,
It may be so, at Shrewsbury.
But if the sun is shining bright,
And games agog, when you receive it
Then fold it up,—say "that's all right,"
And take your cricket bat, and leave it.
When you're knocked up, and wickets down,
And when you panting, tired, and warm[2] are,
Then in the school room pray sit down
In that comfortable corner.
Then will you read, while you repose,
All that I am going to tell you,
Nor think the letter is verbose,
Nor say that I'm a tiresome fellow.
From Cormayeur we backward bore,
O'er St. Bernard's Alps again,
Down upon Lake Leman's shore
Where blue[3] waves on Chillon roar.
Round by Neufchâtel we came,
By ancient Granson's towers of fame;[4]
And where the Rhine for evermore
'Mid columnar rocks of grey
Thunders down with lightening spray,
Underneath an iris bright,
That arches o'er with trembling light.

[1] [On a subsequent visit to Courmayeur, in 1849, Ruskin again complained that the moraines in this valley by no means justify its name: see letter to his father in Collingwood's *Life*, 1900, p. 114, given in a later volume of this edition. For the etymology of *Allée Blanche*, see Coolidge's edition of Ball's *Western Alps*, 1898, p. 328 *n*. The visit to Chamouni is ignored in this letter; they were there in July, see above, p. 395.]

[2] [So in the MS. The ed. of 1891 reads "worn."]

[3] [This word was substituted by Ruskin in after years for "the" in the original MS.]

[4] ["'Granson' (Grandson), on the Lake of Neuchâtel, was the scene of the decisive victory of the Swiss over Charles the Bold, March 3, 1476; interesting to the author from the description in Sir W. Scott's *Anne of Geierstein* (chap. xxxii.)."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. For his interest in "the four-square keep of Granson," see *Seven Lamps*, ch. vi. § 1.]

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'Tis sweet to see the peaceful thing
Around the warring waters cling,
With a sort of fearful quivering!
Then to Zurich,
Where I grew sick,—
Almost thought I should have staid a
Day on purpose, but we made a
Dash at Zug,[1] and heard fine music
Played by landlord and landlady.
Mont St. Gothard next we drew nigh,
By Altorf and the lake of Uri.
The Swiss, as you know very well,
Are very fond of William Tell:
To show they've not forgot him,
A chapel's built where from the prore[2]
Of Gessler's[3] boat he leaped ashore,
And *ditto* where he shot him.
Up we went, wondrous high
In the midst of the beautiful dark blue sky,
'Mid St. Gothard's granites tall.
Down we went,—'twas fair and fine,
Down by zig-zags twenty-nine,
Built upon the top of a wall
Close by a torrent's flashing fall.

HOSPICE OF THE GRIMSEL, 6000 *feet high.*
25 Aug^t—a terrible day.

I wonder much what sort of day
This 25th of August may be[4]
In dear old England far away!
Perhaps the sun is shining gaily,
And you may see, by Severn's stream,
The city basking in the beam,
And sloping fields with harvest white,
And distant mountains, bluely bright.
Now turn your gladdened eyes away
From all this landscape warmly gay;

[1] [And sketched there: see plate at p. 32 of Vol. I.]

[2] [A word with which Ruskin would have been familiar from its use by Pope and Scott; misprinted "prow" in the ed. of 1891.]

[3] ["'Gessler' in the original is 'Gesner,' obviously a slip of the pen."—*Editor's Note,* 1891.]

[4] ["R. Fall would have returned to school by the 25th of August, according to the time of the old-fashioned holidays. Dr. Dale, his schoolmaster, is not the Mr. Dale to whom the author went to school in 1834, and to lectures in 1836."—*Editor's Note,* 1891.]

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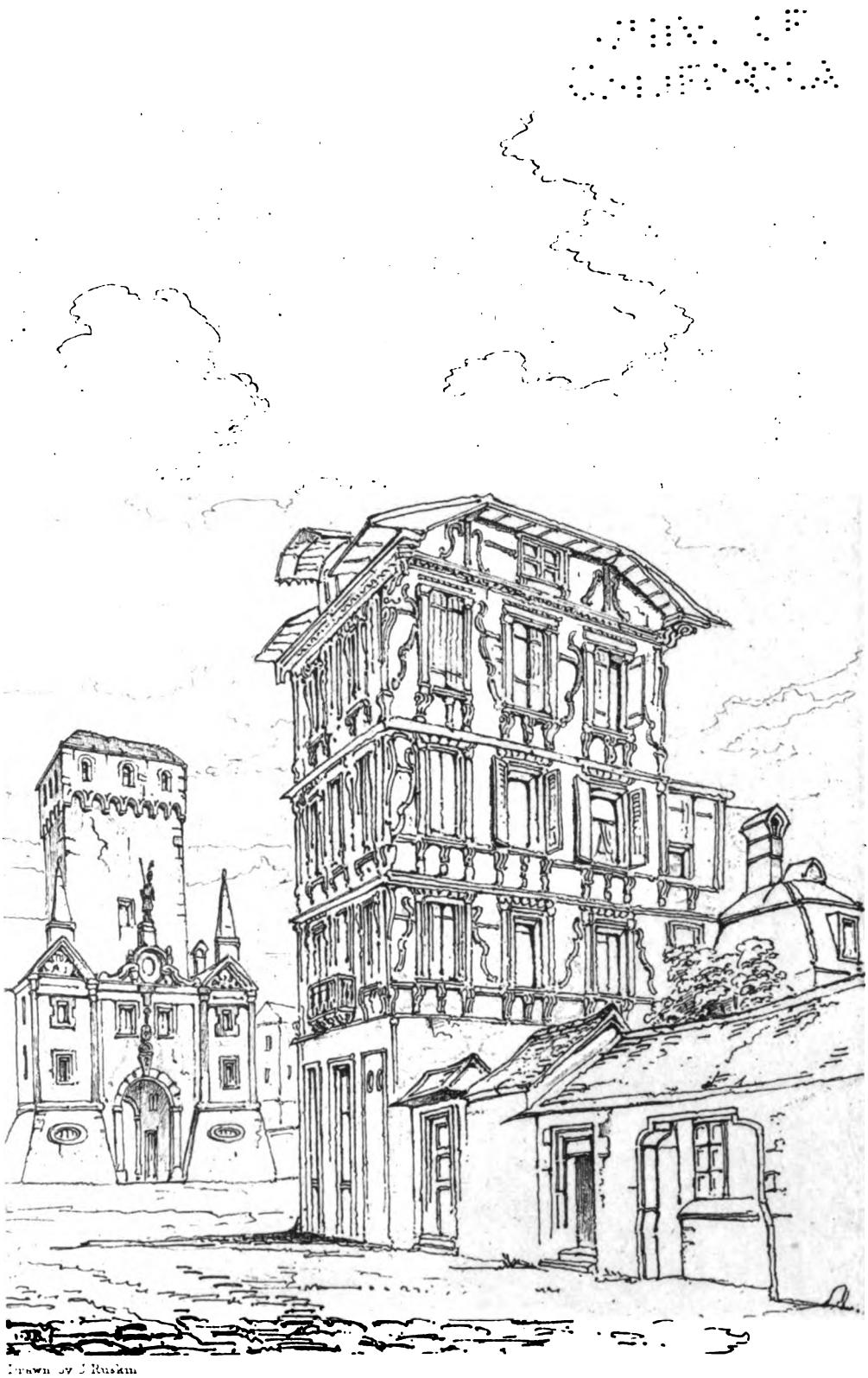

Drawn by J Ruskin

Ancienne Maison, LUCERNE.
1835.

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And read, and think, and try to see
The scene that August brings to me.
I see around me, far and wide,
A weary waste of mountain-side,
Strewed with blocks of granite bare,
With scanty grass blades here and there.
Above, the summits tall and proud
Are buried in a veil of cloud;
But through the misty mantle show
The frosty fields of new fallen snow.
Thick and constant everywhere
The snow flakes ride the rolling air.
The mountain torrents loudly call
And fret the crags with constant fall.
The river that receives them all
Lifts up his voice on high:
On, onward still, with downward gust,[1]
The foam-flakes on his billows rush
Monotonously by.
The fire is bright; the window pane
Is thick with mist, and wet with rain.
My corner-seat, quite warm and cozy,
Makes me feel talkative and prosy.
So, where was I? Can't tell at all,—
So long and tiresomely I've pottered!
Oh yes, descending the St. Gothard,—
"Close by a torrent's flashing fall."[2]
The interest of that pass to me
Lay in its mineralogy.[3]
For that you do not care a fig. I
Will take you to the top of Righi.

The vapours came with constant crowd;[4]
The hill was wrapt up in the cloud.

[1] [So in the MS.; the ed. of 1891 reads, to the improvement of the line, "constant gush."]

[2] [Ruskin is here quoting himself; see above, last line of passage written from "Top of Righi."]

[3] ["De Saussure, already, as afterward, the author's 'master in geology' (*Præterita*, i. ch. vii. § 139; *Modern Painters*, vol. iv.), describes the St. Gothard minerals and rock structure with care (*M. P.*, vol. iv. and Appendix 2); regarding as mineralogical phenomena the contortion and brecciation which others regard as geological, and trying to account for them by aqueous crystallisation; as if the agatescent minerals contained within the rock-masses were epitomes or microcosms of the whole mountain-chain."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[4] ["In *Modern Painters*, vol. i. pt. ii. sec. iii. ch. iv. §§ 31–34, a famous passage begins 'Stand upon the peak of an isolated mountain at daybreak,' and goes on to describe an Alpine morning,—storm,—sunset,—moonlight —and sunrise: asking 'Has Claude

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Hour after hour 'twas misty still,
As evening darkened on the hill.
Before the sun had left the sky
The wind stretched out his mighty hand,
And back recoiled the clouds, and nigh
Out looked the sunset luridly,
Like smoulder of a dying brand;
And white-edged thunder clouds around
Gave forth a hollow, groaning, sound.
Then onward came the cloudy tide;
Again it met from either side;
And darkness came, and darkness dire,
But cleft by constant sheets of fire.
Broad blazed the lightening's blinding flash,
With following thunder's instant crash:—
A pleasant night on which to be
Five thousand feet above the sea!
At half-past three we first looked out;
The stars were sprinkled all about;
The sky was blue, the air was clear,
And the white moon looked wondrous near.[1]
The golden streaks of breaking dawn
Across the smiling east were drawn.
Relieved against the brilliant light
Dark purple outlines met the sight;
Which, brighter still as grew the flame,
Darker and purpler still became.
Round all the south, eternal snows
On dark horizon paly[2] rose;
And it was beautiful to see
The light increasing constantly,
To search the gloom in vallies deep,
And wake the flowers on mead and steep.
Come, stand upon the Kulm with me!
The sun is up; on what shines he?

given this?' and, in notes, introducing various works of Turner as illustrating the sky effects of nature. The passage is quoted in *Frondes Agrestes*, § 25, where in a note the author remarks, 'I have seen such a storm on the Rigi.' In this letter we get the actual occasion, in the middle of August 1835; and find that the *Modern Painters* passage is a reminiscence of matter of fact. Beginning it with § 32, and keeping § 31 for the conclusion, we can compare it with this passage in the 'Letter,' and find, in both, the gathering storm,—the sweeping apart of the clouds by sudden wind,—the lurid sunset and thunderstorm,—gradually clearing up to moonlight; the purple dawn and sunrise on snow-peaks; and fine morning with mist in the valleys."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[1] [This word, again, was corrected by Ruskin in later years; in the original MS. it is "clear."]

[2] [A word of Ruskin's at this time, see "Tour on the Continent"; the ed. of 1891 reads "palely."]

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HOSPITAL: Pass of St. GOTHARD.
1835.

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Mountain on mountain rosy red
With glacier helmet lifts his head.
Oh, the long chain of snow-fields white,
Like the pale moon of summer night,
Peak over peak with wondrous glow!
While wreathing vapours brew [1] below,
And on the other side were seen
Innumerable champaigns green.
Far, and more far, and faint they grew,
Expansive, beautiful, and blue!
Many a large lake beneath us set,
Without a breeze its waves to fret,
Like silver mirror distant lay
In many a lovely creek and bay;
Reflected, sank beneath its strand
Dark woods and flowery meadow land,
And farther down the mountains high,
And underneath the morning sky
By Pilate's side you might discern
The glittering towers of fair Lucerne.
City, and hill, and waving wood,
Blue glaciers cold, and sparkling flood,—
All that was marvellous or fair
Seen at a single glance was there.
It was a landscape wondrous rich
In countless lovely scenes, on which
My paper in a well filled state
Forbids me to expatiate.[2]

THUN, 2 *September*.

I sit me down to make a whole
Of this long winded rigmarole:
To put in order its confusion,
And bring the tale to a conclusion.
I've written it at different stations,
From very different elevations.
By writing as the journey goes on,
My dates are wondrously well chosen.
You see I've taken in its turn all;
In fact, I've kept a sort of journal;

[1] [So in the ed. of 1891; "brow" in the MS.]
[2] [The last four lines were omitted in the ed. of 1891.]

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Hoping it may be in my power
To interest some [1] leisure hour,
And make your fancy cross the sea,
And roam in Switzerland with me.[2]

[1] [So in the MS. The ed. of 1891 reads "a."]

[2] [The MS. adds a prose postscript :—

"*P.S.*—Perhaps you do not care about Switzerland, and it would have given you more pleasure if I had waited until I could fill my paper with an account of Rome and Naples; but I am of opinion that what is said of giving may as well be applied to writing, that he who writes quickly writes twice, and is very likely to write twice too; and I am now glad that my letter is ready to despatch, for, from the cholera's having appeared in Italy (where I am afraid it is likely to prevail to a terrible extent), and from some other circumstances, I think there is not the least chance of our getting the length of Rome. We think of passing the Simplon to Milan, perhaps to Venice, crossing the Stelvio, and through the Tyrol to Vienna, and then home by Paris, so that I expect to be at home to receive you at Christmas. It is very wrong of you, the fonder you are of me, the more you will exult in my disappointment. Sketches innumerable I have which you must not yawn over, poetry interminable I have which you must not sleep over; and we will go over Switzerland very comfortably together on the green chairs in the study; and I have some splendid minerals of St. Gothard and Mont Blanc to shew Eliza, and now for the present farewell. I will write again before I return, where from, I know not. My best regards to all at home. Dear R., etc., etc."]

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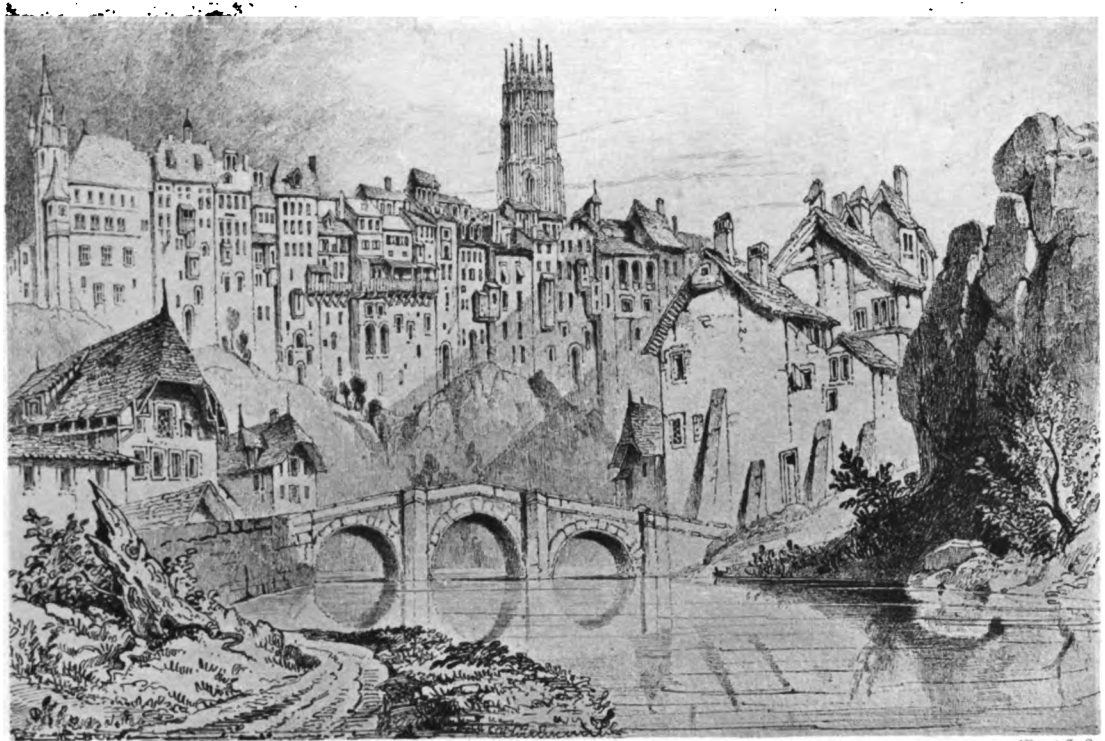

Fribourg.
1835.

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[VERONA][1]

The moon is up, the heaven is bright
With righteous light, exceeding pure;
Verona's towers are dark or light,
With lustre insecure.
The Roman ruin stands supreme,
And round about it walks the gleam,
And through the arches tall;
Half-bewildered, half afraid
To rescue from the solemn shade
The sculpture on the columns laid,
Or olive on the wall.

. . . . . .

The arches echo now no more
With the low groans of victim dying;
Or prisoned lion's famished roar
His human prey espying;
Or shout of those who came to see
With dryer[2] thirst of blood than he—
Or gladiator's cry,
Who struggles still with fitful tread.
Oh, blessed is the vanquishèd,
And honoured in his bloody bed
Whose fortune is—to die.

[*October.*]

[1] [Not hitherto printed. The MS. given to Mr. George Allen by Ruskin in 1885 has on the other side a pencil sketch, signed "Guttanen, Pass of St. Gothard, J.R., 1835." But Guttanen is on the Pass of the Grimsel; Ruskin was there on August 24 in that year. In the Visitors' Book of the Due Torri at Verona there is the following entry: "Oct. 2, 1835, Mr. and Mrs. Ruskin and family" (in the father's handwriting, and then in the mother's), "bien satisfaits."]

[2] ["Fiercer" erased.]

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VENICE[1]

THE moon looks down with her benignant eyes
On the blue Apennine's exulting steep;
Many a large star is trembling in the skies,
Lifting its glory from the distant deep.
How high the marble carved rocks arise,
Like to a lovely thought in dreamy sleep!
Along the weedy step and washen door
The green and drowsy surges, moving slow,
Dash on the ancient, tesselated floor;
Or still, and deep, and clear, and coldly flow
Beside their columned banks and sculptured shore;
Or waken a low wailing, as in woe,
Where sleeps beneath the unbetraying water
The victim, unrevenged, of secret midnight slaughter.

The palaces shine paly[2] through the dark,
Venice is like a monument, a tomb.
Dead voices sound along the sea; and hark,
Methinks, the distant battle's fitful boom!
Along the moonlit pavement of St. Mark
The restless dead seem flitting through the gloom.
There, melancholy, walks,—the Doge's crown
High on his gleaming hair,—the warrior grey.
How passionless a chill has settled down
Upon the senator's brow! A fiery ray
Gleams underneath the bravo's stormy frown!
Who long ago have vanished, awake,
Now start together from the various grave,—
Live in the silent night, and walk the conscious wave.

[*October.*]

[1] ["Intended for the 'Journal of a Tour,' and possibly written at Venice, October 6–17, 1835, or at any rate soon after."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. First published in the *Poems*, 1891, i. pp. 236–237. From MS. Book viii. The first lines of these verses recall Ruskin's drawing of "The Lombard Apennine" (Plate 14 in vol. iii. of *Modern Painters*), which, however, was sketched at Parma.]

[2] [*Cf.* note 2 on p. 436.]

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SALZBURG[1]

On Salza's quiet tide the westering sun
Gleams mildly; and the lengthening shadows dun,
Chequered with ruddy streaks from spire and roof,
Begin to weave fair twilight's mystic woof,
Till the dim tissue, like a gorgeous veil,
Wraps the proud city, in her beauty pale.
A minute since, and in the rosy light
Dome, casement, spire, were glowing warm and bright;

[1] [The author first saw Salzburg in October 1835. This piece, spelt "Saltzburg," was published in *Friendship's Offering* for 1835, pp. 37–38, signed "J. R." It was accompanied by an engraving of "Saltzburg," by E. Goodall, from a drawing by W. Purser. It was not included in the *Poems*, 1850, but is the first piece (pp. 1–3) in the American edition. It is in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 238–239. "In the note in both editions, 'St. Rupert' reads 'St. Hubert' twice over,—wrongly, for it was Hruadprecht or Rupert, Bishop of Worms, who, at the close of the seventh century, established the monastic colony of Salzburg among the ruins of the Roman city of Juvava. Towards the middle of the eighth century the monk Virgilius from Ireland built a church at Salzburg, dedicated it to St. Rupert, and became first Archbishop of Salzburg. Many of the apostles of Germany, both before and after Rupert, were English, like Boniface, or Scots from Ireland or Iona, like Columban and Gall; but I confess I have not been able to assure myself of Rupert's Scottish origin; while St. Hubert was a native of Aquitaine."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.

There is no MS. of the fair copy; but the first draft of the poem (in MS. Book viii.) is very different. It is given here as an example of the way in which, in the case of pieces intended for publication, the author polished and re-wrote :—

The sun was low on Salza's silver deep,
Broad loomed the lofty city in its sleep;
Dome over dome in arched array was set,
Spire over spire, and sparkling minaret.
How red you saw the swarthy sunset shine
Where rose St. Rupert's mighty marble shrine,
Rich with the spoils of many a Hartzwald mine.
The Fortress reared its dark and huge ascent,
Crag poised on crag, with each its battlement
From its foundation lifted like a cloud,
But moveless, changeless, beautifully proud.
Shadow imbued with sunbeams like a veil
Clasps the wide city, wreathes its outlines pale,
And mingles roof with roof, and tower with tower;
Twilight's soft magic brooding o'er the hour
Mysterious beauty upon all seen there,
And all unseen, imagined passing fair.
Oh, what can break the still, at even shed,
Just as the sun displays his parting red?

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A minute since, St. Rupert's stately shrine,
Rich with the spoils of many a Hartzwald mine,*
Flung back the golden glow: now, broad and vast,
The shadows from yon ancient fortress cast,
Like the dark grasp of some barbaric power,
Their leaden empire stretch o'er roof and tower.

* The dome of the Cathedral of St. Rupert is covered with copper; and there are many altars and shrines in the interior, constructed of different sorts of marble, brought from quarries in the vicinity. St. Rupert, to whom the Cathedral is dedicated, was by birth a Scotchman.

There is no sound that comes not sweetly by
When the last lights upon the landscape die.
Low chaunts the fisher where the waters pour,
And murmuring voices come along the shore;
And many a plash of wave upon the side
Of yon dark boat that slumbers on the tide.
And there are sounds from city and from hill,
Shore, forests, flood and field, yet all seems still.
I left the shore, and ere the night's descent
Through huge St. Rupert's massive portal went.
Full many a marble there of changing hue,
Chiselled and fretted, walled the temple through;
Successive altars lit with incensed flame
Rose through the chapels, none without a name;
And the worn pavement every shrine before,
Of long devotion certain witness bore;
And there was many a statue nobly wrought,
And many a painting from the southward brought,
Planned by those master-minds that ever stand
The life, the glory, of their native land.
And as hard rock that 'mid some softer stone
Stands from the rest, unbuttressed, and alone,
A bulwark rears its iron strength for aye,
The weaker crag around it wears away.
So shall their memory lift itself at last
Forth from the ruins of the æras past;
So, like some lofty beacon, constant shine,
Distinctly seen amid the mist of time.
The vesper hymn was singing, as the night
Rolled round the temple, veiling from the sight
The mighty dome so high, and heavenward piled,
Beneath whose concave slumbers Scotland's child,
The Good St. Rupert, and full silently
Star after star was scattered on the sky;
And I forgot the city, as I gazed
Where thousand worlds through all the moonlight blazed,
And I held through them commune with the heaven.

Here the draft ends. In line 33 "none" may be "now"; the MS. is barely legible. His father seems to have revised this poem, by correcting "lies" to "was" in line 1; "Silent and" to "But moveless" in line 11; and "Loud shouts" to "Low chaunts" in line 22. In line 43 he has also pencilled "white soft" over "weaker"; and in line 47 "glowing through" over "seen amid."]

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Sweet is the twilight hour by Salza's strand,
Though no Arcadian visions grace the land:
Wakes not a sound that floats not sweetly by,
While day's last beams upon the landscape die;
Low chants the fisher where the waters pour,
And murmuring voices melt along the shore;
The plash of waves comes softly from the side
Of passing barge slow gliding o'er the tide;
And there are sounds from city, field, and hill,
Shore, forest, flood; yet mellow all and still.

But change we now the scene, ere night descend,
And through St. Rupert's massive portal wend.
Full many a shrine, bedeckt with sculpture quaint
Of steel-clad knight and legendary saint;
Full many an altar, where the incense-cloud
Rose with the pealing anthem, deep and loud;
And pavements worn before each marble fane
By knees devout—(ah! bent not all in vain!)
There greet the gaze; with statues, richly wrought,
And noble paintings, from Ausonia brought,—
Planned by those master-minds whose memory stands
The grace, the glory, of their native lands.
As the hard granite, 'midst some softer stone,
Starts from the mass, unbuttressed and alone,
And proudly rears its iron strength for aye,
While crumbling crags around it melt away;
So 'midst the ruins of long eras gone,
Creative Genius holds his silent throne,—
While lesser lights grow dim,—august, sublime,
Gigantic looming o'er the gulfs of Time!

[*October.*]

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[THE WORLD OF THE SKY][1]

THIS evening, ere the night closed in,
I was admiring of the sky.
Clouds, grey and colourless and thin,
Were scattered everywhere on high;
But o'er the Norwood hills did lie
A heap of cold unbroken white;
The darker cloud, that passed it by,
Like fragments of the coming night,
But made its radiance more bright.

I could have thought that o'er the wood
There glanced a heap of Alpine snow,
But that no during granite stood
The vain and withering wreaths below.
It parted with its ruby glow
And walked away in kingly guise.
Others, but not less splendid, show,
Before the lightening more shall rise
And deck with varied robe the skies.

I've often thought the heavens high
Another lovely world to be,
And scenes of mighty majesty
Stand ever there for us to see—
Mountain and crag, and tower and tree,
Terror and peace, and calm and storm;
Yet all before the tempest flee;
From morn to eve, from eve to morn,
Changing their vain and fickle form.

[1] [From a rhyming letter to his father (MS. Book xi.), dated March 11, 1835. Not hitherto printed; of interest as an example of Ruskin's early sky-studies. So again in a prose letter to his father of March 19, 1836, he writes:—

"A sky nearly as cloudless as that heaven which shone so brightly on Mont Blanc when you and I ascended the Montanvert is spread over the range of the Norwood Hills."]

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[THE INVASION OF THE ALPS][1]

THE forest boughs and leaves are still;
No sound disturbs the drowsy air;
Save upon yon crag-buttressed hill;—
A motley crowd is gathered there,
The young, the fearless, and the fair;
And the old man with gleaming hair.
And there is lifting of hands in prayer:
For the foe down their valley his army hath led,
Village and hamlet in ruin are red:
Like a plague, through the night they passed o'er, leaving only
The desolate hearth, and the hall very lonely.

[*About December.*]

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 230. From MS. Book viii. In line 9, the ed. of 1891 is followed in reading "are" for "is" in the MS.]

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CONVERSATION

SUPPOSED TO BE HELD BETWEEN MR. R., MRS. R., MISS R., AND MASTER R., ON NEW-YEAR'S MORNING, 1836[1]

Mr. R. What a time,—nearly nine!
Miss R. Breakfast's been a long time ready.
Mrs. R. What a wind from behind!
Mary can't have shut the door.
It is open, I am sure.
Go and shut it
Quickly.
Miss R. But it,
Ma'am, is shut already.
Mrs. R. Is it close? I suppose,
Then, it's something in the kitchen,—
Windows open,—doors ajar.
Lucy, Lucy! go and do see!
Lucy. Ma'am, there an't.
Mrs. R. I'm sure there are.
Mr. R. You don't expect that at this time it
Can be any better!
Climate, climate,—only climate!
This is English weather!
Sharply here the winters close in;
Here you know we can't complain
Of cold severe.
Master R. Ponds all frozen!
Miss R. Hail and snow!
Master R. Wind and rain!
Mr. R. Glass and bones all brittle! I
Vex myself with thinking how
Fine the weather may be now
Far away in Italy.
Master R. Sky so blue over you!
Miss R. Moon so bright in the night!

[1] ["'Miss R.,'—Mary Richardson, the author's cousin and adopted sister (*Præterita*, i. ch. iv. § 78). 'Mary,'—Miss R. or Mary Stone, cook at Herne Hill, 1827–36. 'I have never seen a fillet of veal rightly roasted, nor a Yorkshire pudding rightly basted, since Mary Stone left us to be married in 1836.' 'Lucy,'—'Our perennial parlour-maid, Lucy Tovey, came to us in 1829, remaining with us till 1875' (*Præterita*, ii. ch. vi. § 108)."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. First published in the *Poems*, 1891, i. 251–255. From MS. Book x. The style of this piece may be compared with *The Ascent of the St. Bernard* in Vol. I. p. 503.]

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Mr. R. There come neither clouds nor storm;
Master R. But lovely weather,
Miss R. Mild and warm.
Mrs. R. Ay, and poison in the air!
Better here than anywhere,—
Sitting at the breakfast-table,
Reading in your easy-chair.
All your party
Strong and hearty,
Gathered round a cheerful fire
Warmly blazing:—
'Tis amazing
That you grumble constantly!
Pray, what more would you desire?
Mr. R. Softer air and sunnier sky,
And a clime where no one knows
What it is to blow one's nose.
Ever since the Alps we crossed
—'Twas indeed a piece of folly—
We've been really tempest tost,—
Drenched with rain and pinched with frost.
Then the town's so melancholy!
People come for hours to chatter
Over every little matter;—
My prices and my wine run down,—
This too pale, and that's too brown.—
Mrs. R. Yet they come in every day for it,
And you know you make them pay for it!
Mr. R. (*without noticing the interruption*).
There behind my desk sit I,
Writing letters dull and dry;
Or in the docks, I stand and shiver,
In the damp air of the river;
Or in the docks where mingled are
Sawdust, cobwebs, oil and tar;
Or on the quay, when London fog sheds
A yellow light on butts and hogs-heads,
'Mid vessels, anchors, ropes, and bowsprits,—
I often find myself in low spirits.
And in the midst of it all, I
Think how very different
Were my employments, when we went
Travelling in Italy;—
Seeing churches, large and fair,—
Master R. Gems and marbles, rich and rare,—
Miss R. Palaces of pictures quite full,—
Mr. R. Lakes and mountains,—
Master R. Oh, delightful!

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Mr. R. Distant Alps, and handsome cities;
Is it not a thousand pities
That we are not there?
Mrs. R. No, indeed! I wonder to hear you!
Don't you know, my dear, that here you
Have the same thing every day,
After getting through the first of it?
Mr. R. Is not that just what I say?
That's the very worst of it!
Not change, indeed! I wish it would!
Mrs. R. I never knew a man so rude:
You interrupt so! Here, I say,
You stoutly keep the cold at bay;
But there, on whistling wings the wind blows
Through cracking walls and open windows,
Bringing o'er the Adriatic,
To the tourist so exstatic,
Colds, catarrhs, and pains rheumatic;
Or Sirocco, from Morocco,
With its poison heated breath,
Blows across the panting plain
Cholera, and plague, and death.
'Twould be an improvement, truly,
On the cold that ends our year,
If you'd take the cold more coolly,—
Spring will soon be here!
Mr. R. (*after a pause of reflection*).
Travelling, I must allow,
Sometimes is a little cloying;
And has inconveniences,
Though perhaps they are not great,—
Rising early, riding late,—
Also, notes of one's expenses,
Which I always find annoying.
And though a wish for sunnier skies
Sometimes in one's mind will rise,
Vexing one a little, I
Think that one may spend as gay
A Christmas or a New-Year's-Day
In England, as in Italy![1]

[*End of December.*]

[1] ["I can scarcely account to myself, on any of the ordinary principles of resignation, for the undimmed tranquillity of pleasure with which, after these infinite excitements in foreign lands, my father would return to his desk opposite the brick wall of the brewery, and I to my niche behind the drawing-room chimney-piece. But to both of us, the steady occupations, the beloved samenesses, and the sacred customs of home were more precious than all the fervours of wonder in things new to us, or delight in scenes of incomparable beauty" (*Præterita*, i. ch. vii. § 155).]

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1836

(AT 17 YEARS OF AGE)[1]

JACQUELINE[2]

She wanders on, the darkening forest through,
By glancing snow, by glacier cold and blue;
By sunny rock, by Alpine pasture green,
She wanders onward still, poor Jacqueline!
The storm is up, the tempest wreathes the hill,
But Jacqueline is on the mountain still;
And the lone shepherd sees her flitting by,
With pale, cold cheek, and darkly startled eye,
And still she flings, the mountain air along,
The moaning burden of an ancient song;
Her voice is low and sweet, and thus sings she:—
"Return again, my love, return to me!"
She seeks for one who left his cottage door
As morning dawned, but who returned no more.
The torrent sang his requiem long ago,
And round him wrapt a shroud of mountain snow.
Yet aye she listens, with quick ear, to greet
The cheerful tread of his returning feet;
Climbs with unwearied step, from day to day,
The mountain path by which he went away.
A changing, flickering fire that will not die,—
A sickened hope,—is in her restless eye;
A hope, that sits in reason's vacant throne.
And still she wanders o'er the wild alone.
And plaintive breezes hear, in drifting by,
Her low, melodious, melancholy cry;
For still she sings, with gentler voice sings she;—
"Return again, my love, return to me!"

[*About January.*]

[1] [1836 was a turning-point in Ruskin's poetical career. His love for Adèle gave a new motive to his verse, and stirred his activity. In addition to the numerous pieces given in the following pages, he began the drama *Marcolini* (see p. 474), and wrote *Leoni* (Vol. I. p. 287). The love poems already given at pp. 16–18 belong to the same year (*cf.* Introduction, p. xxi.). Among the unpublished verses are several other poems to Adèle, a few Swiss songs, and two rhyming letters to his father.]

[2] [From MS. Book viii. First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 4–5, where, in the last line but one, "gentle" is read instead of the "gentler" of the MS.]

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SWISS MAIDEN'S SONG[1]

THE pines are tall, and dark, and wide;
The sunbeams through their branches glisten,
Upon the mountain's turfy side,
Where cushion-moss is green around.
There, if you lie and listen,
A voice is heard, a soothing sound
Of waters underneath the ground.

It whispers still,—by day, by night;
The streamlet flows, I know not where,
By archèd rocks concealed from sight.
But still a gentle song you meet,—
A tinkling in the air
Rising up beneath your feet,
Soft, and low,—mysterious,—sweet.

'Tis like a voice of gentle tone
Within my heart, from day to day.
I'm by myself, but not alone;
For still it whispers, whispers there.
It always makes me gay:—
It talks of all things good or fair;
—It often talks of young Pierre.

[*February or March.*]

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 10–11. From MS. Book viii.]

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[ALPINE-GLOW][1]

Oh, she was like the light of ruby red
By sinking sun on Alpine mountain shed;
A transient glow across its coldness cast,
A beaming glory far too bright to last;
That, fading, leaves a silence, deep and still,
A dreary darkness,—and a hopeless chill.

Her voice has ceased to joy, her look to bless;
And she has left me in this loneliness.
And my deserted path's obscure, with shade
By the dark leaves of melancholy made.
But thou, dear Sun of memory, ever warrest
With the thick, tangled gloom of sorrow's forest:
And, for the brightest of thy beams, is cast
Her tearful look, the loveliest, and the last;
When she had waved the word she would not say,
Her dark eye glistened as she turned away:
And sickly smiled mine agony, to see
That first, last tear, she ever shed for me.

[*About March–May.*]

[1] [First published (as one poem) in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 12. From MS. Book viii., where, however, the first six and last twelve lines appear as separate poems.]

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[THE IRIS][1]

Hast thou not seen how the Iris is set,
Where the wings of the wind in the waters are wet?
On the rush of the falls, where the spray rises slowly;
Glorious and silent, like something most holy.

So fair in its colour, so faint in its light,—
So peacefully constant, so distantly bright,—
In the tumult of life, or the darkness of woe,
Is the memory of those we have loved long ago.

[*About March.*]

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 13. From MS. Book viii.]

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A LETTER TO HIS FATHER[1].

Oh, such a day!—it would appear
The rainy days of all the year
Around the month of March do rally.
Oh, such a day!—the drifted rain
In stately columns stalks amain
Along the hills, and o'er the valley;
And dashes on the window pane,
Like ocean spray in surges driven.
The wind is high, and wild, and loud;
And thick and threatening comes the cloud
Across the scowling front of heaven;
They darken, darken more and more.
Before the blast the chimney shakes,
Which with a fitful force awakes
Its melancholy roar:
Then stills its thunder for a while.
There's not an organ-pipe more stern,
That shakes with sound the massive pile
And rolls along the columned aisle
Of beautiful Lucerne.[2]
Oh, such a day I never knew!
The glass gone back, the sky looks black;
My paper (and the quire's quite new!)
Don't it look confounded blue?
Oh, how it makes one long to be
Beneath the sun of Italy.

Some eves ago, the moon was bright;
It made me think of fairer night,

[1] ["From the original, an old-fashioned sheet without envelope, post-marked (31 MR. 1836); in No. x. Probably only one of a series of rhyming letters, as the postscript (see p. 457) says, 'You have absolutely let me send you nine sheets, and without any answer;' and his mother, crossing his writing with pencil, mentions a specially interesting letter of her son's sent to Nottingham,—Mr. J. J. Ruskin being away on business, travelling about, and no doubt too busy to answer."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. On the top of the MS. is written "The wind is high on Helle's wave (*Byron. Hem!*)," and "Blow, blow, thou winter wind (*Shakespeare. Hem!*). Oh, such a day." First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 14-20.]

[2] [A daily performance on the fine old organ in the Hofkirche is still one of the attractions of Lucerne.]

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Where, all the glorious darkness through,
No cloud bedims the deepened blue;
Where broad and bright the starlight smiles
Among the many marble isles
Of Ocean's loveliest, dearest daughter:[1]
When o'er the mountains looks the moon
To glance along the green lagoon,
And on the distant, dashing water,
Whose bluely bending billows sweep,
And o'er the sandy hillocks roar
Where Israel's weary wanderers sleep
—Their requiem, the rushing deep—
On Lido's lengthy shore.[2]
Alas! the sky is not the sky,
Not half so blue, so calm, so high:
The stars about its concave strewn
Are not the stars of Trent, at all!
The very moon is not the moon,
And does not look identical!
Oh, gladly would my mind digress
To rove amid the loveliness
Of mountain tall and valley low,
Where glaciers freeze or olives grow,
Or blossoms burst beneath the snow,
Or rocks arise, or aloes blow.
You, father, feel the yearning deep—[3]
And vainly with the wish thou warrest—
To climb again the stormy steep,
And rove beneath the shadowy forest;
Or from the regions desolate,
Where tumbling torrents swirl and sweep,
And eagles sail, and chamois leap,
To seek the vale with vines elate,
Where orange glades hang greenly o'er
The living water's silent shore;

[1] [*Cf.* Shelley's "Lines written among the Euganean Hills":—

"Underneath day's azure eyes
Ocean's nursling, Venice lies."]

[2] [The Jews' Cemetery on the Lido is referred to again in *Marcolini*, Act iii. Sc. iii.; see below, p. 508. It was the subject of some graceful lines by J. A. Symonds:—

"Sad is the place and solemn. Grave by grave,
Lost in the dunes, with rank weeds overgrown,
Pines in abandonment; as though unknown,
Uncared for, lay the dead, whose records pave
This path neglected; each forgotten stone
Wept by no mourner but the moaning wave."]

[3] [*Cf.* above, p. 404 *n.*]

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And from the fruitage golden glow,
And blossoms bright like stars illuming
Emerald leaf and bending bough,
Widely wafts the wind perfuming—
Loaded well the breezes blow.

But where in vision am I going?
Yon dash of sleet has broke my trance,
Revealing to my startled glance
The rushing rain that's swirling still
Along the ridge of Forest Hill;
And faster with the tempest blowing,
Amid the elemental rout,
Yon windmill flings its arms about.
High on the hill it stands, the sign
Of cloudy sky and stormy clime.[1]
Such is the scene which now I view
As I sit down to write to you,
In this last sheet, to end my tale
Of Lincoln's Inn and Mr. Dale,[2]
And you'll excuse my change of measure—
In this I cannot write with ease or pleasure.

When, at the lesson's joyful termination,
I'm in the passage, fixing my cravat on,
And slowly putting greatcoat, gloves, and hat on,
I get a little time for conversation
On various things, with Messrs. Tom and Matson;[3]
Often discuss the business of the nation,
Abuse O'Connell; and we always feel
What a fine Orange orator is Peel.

Then, entering the coach,—the large, old brown,
For, (since the rain which from the heaven pours is
Likely to hurt our chariot) it of course is
Sent when it rains (that's always!) into town;
Seating myself with my back to the horses,
My bag is on the seat beside set down;
As through the jolting streets we roll and bump on, I
Feel that my bag's excessively bad company.

[1] [This couplet was omitted in the ed. of 1891.]

[2] [See Vol. I. p. xlix. Mr. Dale at this time lived in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and Ruskin went there for private lessons.]

[3] ["My fellow-scholars, the two sons of Mr. Dale, Tom and James; and the son of Colonel Matson of Woolwich" (*Præterita*, i. ch. iv. § 91). The ed. of 1891 mends the rhyme in these lines by reading, "We're . . . our . . . greatcoats . . . hats."].

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It does not look a bag of any sense,—
A greenhorn of a bag! I think,—don't you?
A learned bag should always be a Blue,—
Deep blue! Under which colour of pretence,
When you return, I shall request a new
And more sagacious bag, of size immense.
I read at such a rate that there's no knowing
How many books I may require to stow in!

Nevertheless I'm very, very far
From utterly despising it, but grace
It with a very honourable place
Beside me, knowing what its contents are,—
Or opposite me, looking in my face,
Learned and grave, as Porson was, or Parr:
I then am rather tired and weary, or
Else I should take a look at its interior.

And by the church we go, my bag and I,
Which stately church, as far as I'm aware, is
Called,—not St. Clement's,—no, I think, St. Mary's;
A handsome spire it has, and wondrous high;
And from the courtyard of our college[1] there is
A view of it, which I intend to try,
When once the weather shall be warm and fine,
For spring is coming, I suppose, in time.

Then by the road, the Waterloo, we go on
(That vile approach, which—isn't it a pity?
Adjoins the finest bridge in all the city),[2]
And passing Walworth, Camberwell, and so on,
Come to our hill, which always looks so pretty,—
The wooden palings in a rural row on
Each side, and over them you cannot think
How sweetly almonds smile, and blush the peach-trees pink.[3]

And then, as we drive in, comes barking out
Dash,[4] with his noisy welcome boring us,
In exultation most uproarious.
Since painters have had pots of paint about,
His back is like the rainbow, glorious
With blue and green,—there's scarce a spot without
Some tint. I tell you this, lest you with conster-
Nation behold the many-coloured monster.

[1] [King's College, Strand. The church is St. Mary le Strand.]
[2] [For Ruskin's later criticism of Waterloo Bridge, cf. *Aratra Pentelici*, § 84.]
[3] [*Cf.* ch. ii., "Herne-Hill Almond Blossoms," in *Præterita*, i.]
[4] [See above, p. 281.]

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Thus I have furnished you with statement true
Of all the methods of acquiring Greek
And Latin, in the lessons thrice a week,
And all the various forms which I go through;
And when, instead of writing, I can speak,
I'll give you logical details, till you
Cry out, "What very stupid stuff is it!
I'll sleep! no more! that's quantum sufficit!"

'Twas in this stanza that I did intend
To terminate my letter, if I could.
How very difficult 'tis to conclude,—
From the high flight of rhyming to descend!
Either my endings are abrupt and rude,
Or else my poems never have an end.
I seldom find a stanza a real poser
Save that one which I wish to make the close, sir.

Then this will be a puzzling one, I know.
I want a rhyme; the first that comes I pop
Down, and my Muse's soaring wings I lop.
I wind my watch up when it will not go,
And wind my verse up when it will not stop!
I've three lines only to conclude in, so
You see that this, the next approaching line, is—
This very verse is positively

FINIS.[1]

March 31.

[1] [In the MS. there is a prose postscript:—

"How glad I am this is the last letter I shall have an opportunity of writing you, Papa! What a woeful time you have been away! You have absolutely let me send you nine sheets, and without any answer. And now having concluded mine epistle, I intend to leave poor mamma a small space of plain paper, whereon she may fairly and distinctly set down what she has to say; for she seems always to have something which she wishes to tell you, and for the reception of which she is forced to find fragments of room, writing cross, and topsy turvy, and any way; so that I should be much afraid that you and she would be at cross purposes, or at least you must be very patient and dextrous in deciphering, if you join all the detached pieces correctly together and no mistake; therefore, in order to obviate the necessity of so much invention on her part, and patience on yours, I am content, without further circumlocution, to leave her this little bit of paper at bottom, and to sign myself, my dearest father, your most affectionate son, JOHN RUSKIN."]

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[THE ALPINE LAKE][1]

On yonder mountain's purple crest
The earliest rays of morning rest;
  The latest lines of sunset linger,
When, at the portals of the west,
  The evening, with her misty finger,
Draws o'er the day her curtain grey
And twilight dimly dies away.

Beneath the shadow of the steep
The summer snows do coldly sleep;
  And there a little vale is made,
And a small water, still and deep,
  Within their clasping arms is laid,
Upward gazing on the sky
With its dark and silent eye.

And o'er the mountain, far and near,
There sits a sort of sacred fear:
  It is a place to be alone in,
And not a single sound you hear,
  Except a distant torrent's moaning,
That murmurs through the drowsy air
Like a bell that calls to prayer.

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 21. From MS. Book viii.]

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CONGRATU——[1]

MY DEAREST FATHER,

WHEN I begin a poem, and intend on it
To spend some labour, 'tis my standard rule
To cogitate its title, and to bend on it
My thoughts, and utmost energies; for you'll
Observe, a stupid poem does depend on it,
Just as a person may respect a fool,
If he be Lord, or Baron, Duke, or Knight; all
Such things and people ought to have a title.

I did it here: the habit is inveterate:
(Although I hope my poem won't require it;
For if I think it does, I'll try to better it,
And with poetic fury to inspire it,—
Correct, erase, blot, polish, and ink-splutter it,
Till, even title-less, you should admire it:)
But then, what slightly did my thoughts confuse, I
Had not the smallest idea[2] what the deuce I

Was going to say, to sing, or to indite.
I had not any plan of it, and that, you
Must know, is an impediment, and quite
A posing difficulty. Like a statue,
I sat, to think what title I should write.
You see, I got as far as this "Congratu—"
But at the "u" I stopped, in cogitation
If I might venture to put on the "—lation."

Congratulation! "Upon what?" thought I.
This birthday, sir, of yours, without a rhyme
[illegible]now, I never yet have let pass by.
for Congratulation,—that old Time

[1] [illegible] the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 22–24. There is a draft of this piece [illegible]. Book viii., and a fair copy for presentation in 1A. The text [illegible]

[2] [illegible]llest *idea*.' Mr. Ruskin always accents it so, as in reading [illegible]91.]

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Whips us away with whirlwind pinion,—why,
My poem might be moral, sage, sublime;
But not Congratulative. Sir, like smoke,
Our years fly off! By Jove, it is no joke!

Vainly the guests assemble round the board;
In vain the smile is seen on festive faces;
In vain the table is with dainties stored;
In vain its dish the stately sirloin graces;
In vain the health is drunk, the bumper poured;—
It cannot make us younger; and the case is
A bitter-ish one, at best. We feel it still;
And keep a birthday—as we gild a pill.

Our days, like cataracts swift, do whirl and whiz it
Down rocks of time, with speed which ne'er relaxes.
Oh, what a most unwelcome call,—the visit,
Which lays another year upon our backs, is!
Yet, though the pertinacious day won't miss it,
(As punctual as a gatherer of taxes,)
Some palliation this of its offence is,
That, ending one year, it the next commences.

And gaily we'll commence it, as is meet:
Merrily send we the old year away.
With joy, and prayers of love, we come to greet
You early, in the dawning of the day.
And our good wishes, like an incense sweet,
Rise round the morning of the tenth of May,—
That many rolling suns, with lengthy blaze,
May shine on troops of decimated Mays![1]

May every May come dancing with a smile,
Health in her sun, and vigour in her breeze;
And at your feet her gifts profusive pile,—
Wealth and rejoicing, happiness and ease!
All that can joy bestow or care beguile,—
All you can wish,—be added unto these;
While still I hail them, as they come and go, in
My usual manner, with a little poem!

To my father, May 10, 1836.

[1] ["A pun on the *tenth* of May, his father's birthday."—*Editor's Note,* 1891.]

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EVENING IN COMPANY—MAY 18[1]

1

I HEAR thy name pronounced, Adèle,
With careless lip, and heartless tone:—
The vain magicians cannot tell
That they have roused a master-spell,—
A word of power, to them unknown,
Which widely opes the crystal portal
Of bygone moments, whence[2] I see
A throne where Memory sits immortal,
And points to dreams of joy,—and thee!

2

Chance sounds the changing breeze can fling
Across the harp, with fitful finger;
Or sweep the chords with wayward wing,
And on the quick-responsive string
Long and low vibrations linger.
They strike the chord; but I alone
Can hear the sounds in answer start;
With sweet delay that echoing tone
Rolls round the caverns of my heart.

3

Within those caves there is no day,
And yet there is no darksome night:
For thy remembrance is a ray
Which never, never fades away
And fills them with its damp, cold light.
And through their halls a river rushes,
Deep and constant, clear and free;
In those beams its billow blushes,
And every wave's a thought of thee.

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 25–26. From MS. Book viii. May 18 is the date of the evening which occasioned the verses, not of their composition.]
[2] [J. J. R.'s pencil correction for "where" in the MS.]

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4

Thy gentle name doth rend apart
  The clouds of the forgetful veil,
That dims the heaven of my heart;
I dragged them there; they will depart;—
  And lo! among the vapours pale
The inward sky looks mildly through
  Unchanging, in whose silent sea
Of dark unfathomable blue
  Burn countless stars—the thoughts of thee.

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[ON ADÈLE][1]

Her sisters' words were soft and low,—
I could not guess what thoughts they brought her,
That o'er her mind came like the wind
Across the calm of waveless water.
But oh, her smile was like the light,—
So paly pure, so faintly bright,
Whose fitful flashes quivering cleave
The rosy clouds of summer eve,
Which, on the glowing western sky
Do ope and close, and live, and die.
Oh, how the blushing joys did skip
And burn about that laughing lip,
As changed her thought from grave to gay,
And trembled there with dear delay,
Or softly died, untraced, away.
Oh, dear Adèle, thy smiling sweet
Was of thyself an emblem meet:
Thou wert as beautiful, as pleasant,
To me, alas! as evanescent;[2]
Thou wert a smile, so bright, so brief,
It left the lips of life in grief.
Oh, dear Adèle, thy voice is now
Delighting other souls than mine;
Thy glancing eye and silver brow
On others look, for others shine!
And on my heart's deserted shore
Thou art a melody no more.
Yet, dear Adèle, my grieving breast
Is full of voices lowly singing—
Sweet, as the breezes of the west
The summer roses' odour bringing;—
Soft, as the moon on midnight waves,—
Strange, as the blossomings on graves,
Their darkness half preventing;—
Sad, as the notes of plaintive breath
That the hurt wild swan sings in death,
Alone in her lamenting.

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 27–28. From MS. Book viii.]
[2] [This and the preceding line omitted in the ed. of 1891, which in the following line reads "wast" for "wert." In line 6 it reads "palely"; see note 2 on p. 436.]

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They sing of what I've seen, and what
I never more may see;
Remembering in a lonely lot
The hours I've spent with thee,
Which once have been, but now are not
And never more may be.[1]

[1] [The last six lines omitted in the ed. of 1891.]

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[A MOMENT'S FALTER][1]

'Twas but a moment's falter—it is gone.
I am firm now,—I have mine armour on;
I've bound my heart about with links of steel,
Till its dead numbness scarce can throb nor feel.
I am all rock; nor word nor thought again
Shall shake the endurance of the clasping pain;
Nor trembling lip, nor glistening eye shall show
The secret springs of agony below.
Her name is named, and I'm unmoved the while,
And smile with others,—not as others smile.
Oh, gaily laughs the sea, when broad and bright
The silver surges meet the morning light;
But, underneath, the waves are dark and still
In fearful silence and in deathlike chill,
Where sickening billows lull the corpses' sleep
In the black caverns of the lightless deep,
And dead men's bones all horrible gleam through
The dim corruption of the ghostly blue.
Oh, lost Adèle, when I am torn from thee,
I may seem gay, for there are none can see.
The deep regrets of what is now no more
Cling, like black weeds along a lonely shore,
Clasping the heart, for nothing can destroy
The worm that bites the roots of withering joy,
When present moments interrupt the rays,
The faintly falling light, of other days,
And dash away the day-dreams that beguile,—
Thy fancied glance and thy remembered smile.

[1] [Not hitherto printed. From MS. Book viii.]

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[NATURE UNTENANTED][1]

With fingers light, the lingering breezes quiver
Over the flowing of the still, deep river,
Whose water sings among the reeds, and smiles
'Mid glittering forests and luxuriant isles.
The wooded plain extends its azure ocean—
Waves without voice, and surges without motion.
And the red sunset, through the silent air,
Wide o'er the landscape shakes its golden hair.
Bright flush the clouds, along the distance curled,
That stoop their lips to kiss the gladdened world,
Where the long ridges indistinct retire
And melt and mingle with the heaven of fire.
Far and more far the lines of azure sweep,
Faint as our thoughts when fading into sleep;
When pale and paler on the brain defined,
The distant dreamings die upon the mind.
Oh, widely seems yon narrow plain to swell,—
Then, oh! how far am I from thee, Adèle!
For many a broad champaign of summer green
And many a waving forest spreads between,
And many a wide-extended, surgy hill,
And sullen, rushing river, dark and chill;
And the deep dashing of the dreary sea
Is barrier between us constantly.
And here there is no dreaming of the past,
Here is no halo by remembrance cast,—
No light to linger o'er the lonely scene
With faint reflection, where thou hast not been.
Nature has lost her spirit stirring spell,
She has no voice, to murmur of Adèle.
There's nothing here, and nothing seems to be,—
And nought remembers, nothing mourns with me.
Here was thy voice unheard, thy face unknown,
And thy dear memory's in my heart alone.

[Richmond, *July*.]

[1] ["Written during a short visit to Richmond in July. Compare *Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 209, in which he speaks of his 'real depth of feeling, and (note it well, good reader) a true and glorious sense of the newly revealed miracle of human love, in its exaltation of the physical beauty of the world;' and see the poem 'The Departed Light' (p. 205)."—*Editor's Note*, 1891. First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 29–30. From MS. Book viii.]

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[SONG][1]

In winter thou camest, thou madest to rejoice
The still and sad breeze with the sound of thy voice;
The light of thine eye did the darkness beguile,
And my spirit could bask in the sun of thy smile.

Oh, the soft eye of summer is beautiful now;
There are leaves on the forest, and birds on the bough:
The dew and the breezes are balmy by night,—
The earth is all glory, the heaven is all light.

But cold is my lonely heart, never to me
Can the summer of gladness be green without thee:
Fairly the spring may blush, gaily begin,—
'Twill be bright, if it cheereth the winter within![2]

[*Summer*].

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 31. From MS. Book viii.]
[2] [In the MS. the words "Adela, Adela," are added as a refrain at the end of each verse.]

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MONT BLANC[1]

THE shadows they are long and deep,
The sky is shadowing into sleep;
And see, the queen of heaven and night,
In liquid loveliness of light,
Rise on the ruin of the day,
And feed upon its fading ray.
It gleamed on scene so fair to see,
I well-nigh deemed it fantasy;
For I have dreamed of fairy-land,
Of dance of sprites and elfin band;
And I have dreamed in reverie,
With fancy's wayward witcherie,
Of spots I thought might never be,
(Visions like these of fancy's birth
Seemed far too fair for aught on earth)—
Of crystal lake, of mountains blue,
And spotless snow, and glaciers too;
Of meadows gay as emerald green,
And bright with cloudless sunshine sheen;
And I have dreamed of crystal bower
Lit with red light at evening hour;
Of ruby mine—of coral cave—
Of caverns green with ocean wave;
But ne'er my visionary glance
Shaped aught so lovely in its trance,
As opens to the gazing eye
When the sun sets on Chamouni.
The sun rode round the heavens that day
Without one cloud to bar his way,
And, worthy of his noontide glow,
Shot his last rays upon the snow;
A few light flakes his disk beside
Caught the clear light they could not hide,

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 34–35. One MS. of this (Book vii.) is incomplete, as it stops at "flakes" in line 32. The only complete copy is in MS Book iA; this copy reads "shading" in line 2, and "scenes" in line 7. Both MSS are in his mother's (?) hand. The piece is not dated in Book vii., but it occurs among work of 1836. It is, therefore, not part of the 1833 Tour, though the metre is the same.]

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And like a shower of suns around him,
With chains of amaranth they bound him,
And reared on high, all regal red,
Mont Blanc his pure æthereal head.
That mighty crest stood cloud-like forth,
As scarce connected with the earth;
Arose its dome with archy swell,
Lone, lovely, inaccessible.
Some cloudy streaks like amethyst
Hung round its side, its crags they kissed,
Or gathering into billows high,
Like fretted ocean in the sky,
Rolled round his unperturbed head,
So magically islanded.

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A RHYMING LETTER[1]

MY DEAREST RICHARD,—[2]

I hope you will not (moved by the delay
Of mine epistle to this distant day)
Accuse me of neglect; for if you do,
I can retort an equal blame on you:
For I, who in my study's height sublime
See every wave of calmly passing time
Flow softly onward in one beaten track—
My only journies into town and back,—
Horace or Homer, all I choose between,—
Dulwich or Norwood my sole change of scene,—
Find every hour exactly like its brother,
And scarce can tell the days from one another;
And cannot find a single circumstance,
As I review, with a reverted glance,
The fast flown autumn months from end to end,
To fill a page, or interest ev'n a friend;
While you, whose distant wandering steps have trod
The blue lake's glittering shingle and the sod—
The short, crisp sod, which on the mountains high
Braves the unkindness of their cloudy sky,—
Whose velvet tuftings most I love to feel
Result elastic underneath my heel—
You, sir, I say, whose eye hath wandered o'er
Bala's blue wave and Harlech's golden shore,
And seen the sun declining towards the west
Light the lone crags of Idris' triple crest,

[1] [First published in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 36–40. From MS. Book vii. in his mother's (?) hand.

"Written 'a fortnight almost gone,' since he went to Oxford, October 17, therefore probably about October 29, at Herne Hill. His matriculation is described also in *Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 214. Richard Fall started with the author on a tour in Wales, Aug. 1841, but parted at Pont-y-Monach owing to the author's illness (*Præterita*, ii. ch. iv. § 60). They were together in May 1849 at Vevey and Chamouni. R. Fall afterwards went on the Stock Exchange, married, became wealthy, and died, aged upwards of fifty, in 187– (*Præterita*, ii. ch. xi. § 211)."—*Editor's Note*, 1891.]

[2] [See note to p. 429.]

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

at Dulwich
J. Ruskin. 1842.

At Dulwich.
1842.

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And watched the restless waters dash and swell
By Pont y Monach,—should have much to tell.
You said, you know, that you would keep a journal
Wherein t' insert the quintessence or kernel
Of your day's doings, like to that of Crusoe.
I hope, but don't believe you have. To do so
Is the severest test of the stern quality
Of a man's powers; for it needs punctuality,
Steadiness, firmness, and determination,
And perseverance—the continuation
Of such a thing is really quite laborious,
And its performance actually glorious;
Which if you've not performed, I hope you'll send
Me a large sheet, close written to the end—
Crossed if you like,—containing full details
Of all you saw, and did, and heard in Wales;
Of your adventures and perambulations,
Delights and hardships, pleasures and vexations,
With all the changes of your tasks and rule,
And all the new varieties of school.

As to myself—a fortnight almost gone
Since I went up to put my toga on—
That learned toga, whose important grace
Befits the studious mien and thoughtful pace
Of those who by the banks of Isis dwell,
In classic hall or philosophic cell.

The winter mists were dark as we were dragged all in
Over the nobly-arching bridge of Magdalen,
And twilight sunk, borne by the bat-winged hours,
Down softly on the still, majestic towers;
The calmly passing river held its breath
Among the bending sedges by its path,
As every wave kissed with its lips so cold
Some sculptured stone or fretwork rich and old;
A moveless light, as from some sacred flame,
Through the grey Gothic of the casements came;
(My fancy heard the air, so still, so dim,
Made soft and holy by the vesper hymn;)
The varied form of every gorgeous stain
Shone, brightly burning, on the illumined pane;
And as a gentle dream comes calm and kind
O'er the dark slumber of the lonely mind,
When, through the night of grief that knows no morrow,
Pale visions mock the fevered sleep of sorrow,

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And fill the brain with brightness, and the ear
With long-lost music that it starts to hear—
So through the dimness of the silent night
Floated that stream of soft and sacred light,—
Fell on the sculptures grey, and touched with gold
The stone made living by hands long since cold,—
And showed where, twisted in fantastic wreath,
Strange features grinned, and stone eyes glanced beneath,
Flushed by the flame and by a life in death;
Then fitful o'er the waters danced the ray,
And 'midst the dim reflection died away.

In Oxford there are two hotels—which are
(Perchance you know) the "Angel" and the "Star;"[1]
The landlord has contrived (oh, avarice horrid!)
To put the star upon the angel's forehead,
Which, as I think, both businesses may mar;
'Twill then be falling Angel,—shooting star.
The "Angel" was our choice—we always went
To that—we like an old establishment.
A night, a day past o'er—the time drew near,—
The morning came—I felt a little queer;
Came to the push; paid some tremendous fees;
Past; and was capped and gowned with marvellous ease;
Then went to the Vice-Chancellor to swear
Not to wear boots, nor cut or comb my hair
Fantastically,—to shun all such sins
As playing marbles or frequenting inns,—
Always to walk with breeches black or brown on,—
When I go out, to put my cap and gown on,—
With other regulations of the sort, meant
For the just ordering of my comportment;
Which done, in less time than I can rehearse it, I
Found myself member of the University.
Believe me, sir, it made me quite ecstatical
To hear you had become so mathematical,
And passed the bridge, so strangely named from those
Who cannot pass it. At this half-year's close
I hope such geometrical employment
Will furnish us with profit and enjoyment.
My father and my mother (hang it!—join—
Won't join with any rhyme that I can coin)—

[1] [The "Star" was afterwards the "Clarendon." The "Angel"—a large inn, where Queen Adelaide stayed when she visited Oxford in 1835—has disappeared. It was on the south side of the High Street, nearly opposite Queen's College. Ruskin mentions it again in *Præterita*, i. ch. x. § 213.]

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Mother and cousin beg to join in kind
Love,—and I do remain as undersigned,
With a most loving friendship in my mind,
Remaining based on a firm pediment,
Your most devoted—most obedient—
And most affectionate
JOHN R.[1]

[*October.*]

[1] [The MS. adds the following postscript in prose :—

"*P.S.*—I had something very particular and reasonable to say, and which I reserved for postscript (for I never write reason in rhyme, and consider a letter without a postscript to resemble a puppy without a tail; for as the amiable little beast expresses its sensibilities by the lucubrations or gyrations of its posterior appendage, so is the humour of a letter interpreted by its *postscriptum*, and its meaning like an egg to be sought in its tail (I give you this long parenthesis to accustom you to the style of Thucydides)), but, 'pon honour, I forget what it was. I hear you intend to bottle chemistry for the winter—a wise resolution, for the snow and frost have come on already tremendously. Pray write soon, for I am very curious to hear an account of your journey, particularly your ascent of Cader Idris. I hope your holidays are early, for I expect to be summoned to Oxford about the 12th or 14th of January. I missed you sadly in a frosty walk which I took this morning, and which put me grievously in mind of our winter perambulations. It seemed so strange to be alone. I met your mother and sister. All were quite well."]

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But he shall pay me for my services.
Methinks, to have a noble young Venetian
To fetch and carry for you, and to watch
The humour in your glance, and shape his words
As he deems may be pleasing, to become
Your humble spaniel, crouching to your look
And trembling at your voice, to go, to come,
As you command, to suffer with a smile
Dishonourable blows—methinks such service
Deserves some recompense, a high reward,
Not to be paid with gold: perhaps—with blood.
Oh, father, brother, all I loved on earth,
Dear honour of my house, what fell revenge
Can pale the blackness of your injury?
Oh, father, can I do no more than gild
This dagger with his miserable life?
Can his short death balance the misery
Laid on thee by his father, through long years,
But closing with thy death—the melancholy,
Pale, sad consumption of thy joyless spirit,
My brother, or its unsoothed going forth,
Or my most low and measureless dishonour?
What is there black in his poor death to blot
The written scroll of such long injury?
I've seen a stabbed man lie upon his bier
With a sick smiling on his cold blue lip.
It must be poor, small horror couched in death,
Since the dead smile at it. Oh, can I not
Plant long succession of more grievous stabs
In the undying spirit? Oh, to wear
His night with watching, and his day with fear;
To squeeze his lips, with agony of mind,
And with contending passions, like wild horses
To tear the feeling of his heart to pieces;
To write upon the paleness of his brow,
Here dwelleth misery, to tempt him on
And drag him with a heavy chain of madness
To secret murders, and unspeakable deeds,
And unforgiveable by any mercy:
Then to obey these voices in my heart,
That shriek so loudly out for blood, and with
A heavy harvest of full-fruited crime
Dismiss his cumbered spirit. This would quench
The restless fire within my father's eye,
Which looks upon me still by day, by night;
And my poor brother's clay would, more content,
Mix with a stranger soil, if thus avenged.

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(*The bell of St. Mark's tolls ten.*)

How slowly o'er the waters weighs the tone.
Oh, I will mingle madness with the soul
Of Count Orsino, as that heavy voice
Doth mix itself in the receptive air.
Slowly, slowly, slowly,
Until his heart do howl, engulphed in pain,
And toll its own most miserable knell
Above the wave of death. Pass on, ye hours,
Ye lag, and will not bring me my revenge.
Yet one by one, most multitudinous,
Ye shall all minister to me, and fill
His cup of pain o'erflowing, drop by drop.
Well, I am yet his slave. About this hour
He bade me meet him in the public square,
Near the Rialto. It is time to go. [*Exit.*

SCENE 2

The foot of the Rialto. Twilight. A gondola at the foot of the stairs. Enter from it MARCOLINI *and* MASO.[1]

MARCOLINI. What hour of the night is it, [Antonio]?

MASO. 'Tis the bravo's hour, master; 'tis a very villanous hour as any in the four and twenty; the sun won't shine on it, he's gone—down over the Apennine; the moon won't lighten it, she has not risen out of the sea; the stars will not look upon it—'tis a skulking, shamefaced hour; 'tis the last visitor to many: there's always a soul or two leaves Venice among its mists.

MARCOLINI. How call you the next hour?

MASO. Oh, the next hour is a very amiable hour, master; 'tis the lovers' hour.

MARCOLINI. Place you love so near to death, [Antonio]?

MASO. Even so, master, and if it be akin to death on the one hand, as the next is the masquer's hour, it is akin to folly on the other.

MARCOLINI. Render me a reason, [Antonio].

MASO. Why, some young birds die for love, master, therefore it is akin to death; the more fools they, therefore it is akin to folly.

MARCOLINI. What hour follows the masquer's?

MASO. A very silent hour, nobody's hour; the bats close their wings in it, and the waves don't dash in it; yet 'tis a very attentive hour.

MARCOLINI. How so, [Antonio]?

[1] [There is an error here. In the MS. is "Enter Marcolini and Antonio" (corrected to Maso), and in the dialogue Antonio is corrected to Maso in the case of his first two speeches, but not elsewhere.]

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MASO. 'Tis an hour you might think yourself alone in, yet it has its ears wide open; therefore keep you your lips shut. You may speak unto the water, but one surge talks to another, and the sound goes far. You may whisper unto the air, but your air in Venice is a marvellous telltale. I never knew a discreet wind, nor a breeze that could keep a secret, from Madonna del Aqua on the one side to San Giorgione on the other.

MARCOLINI. Well, push your gondola under the shadow of the bridge, and wait my signal.

[*Exit* MASO.

MARCOLINI (*alone*). The Bravo's hour, said he.
I think there is an influence in the hour
That poisons the affections of the heart,
And makes their stars burn pale. Why, what is this,
This dull, sick pain with which my spirit aches?
Came I not here to meet the Count Orsino?
And is it thus that I do meet my friends?
Was I thus wont to welcome my best friend,
My longest loved, who when he left me, once
Could chill me into winter, and my soul
Would not grow green again till he returned?
Yet now, when he returns from Tuscany,
After an unaccustomed length of absence,
I am obliged to set hypocrisy
Sentinel o'er my heart, and set a smile
Upon my lip, and light up my dull eye
To semblance of a joy at meeting him,
Or not to seem a friend. Is a sirocco
Blowing upon my soul that it should change
To this corpse colour?
How could Orsino stab me so heart deep
In his last letter. It was kind; I think
I'll read it o'er again. (*Takes out a letter.*)
So—well in health—
Ay, that rejoices me, it does rejoice me;
Yet, not so much, perhaps, as it should do—
As it was wont to do. Returning soon,
Will be in Venice such and such an hour—
That glads me not. And then some words of kindness
(I knew that it was kind).—How it seems long
Since he has seen me, hopes I am in health.—
Ay, here's the place, I can scarce see the lines—
"You must rejoice with me, dear Marcolini,
For now I haste to Venice, to declare
A love that I have cherished long and truly,
To a most beautiful and noble lady
(Her parents both approving of my suit),

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Bianca di Carrara. You have seen her;
She is the fairest maiden in all Venice."
Why, yes, my friend Orsino, I have seen her;
Perhaps may love her quite as well as thou—
Thou knowest not. I do not think, Orsino,
Thou wouldst consider it worthy of thy friendship
To slay thy Marcolini. Yet he will—
Her parents both approving—so they must:
He is of ancient noble family.
And for Bianca—she, I think, will love him—
For none could know Orsino, and not love—
And then she will forget poor Marcolini.
But I could not forget—and her sweet love
Is to my spirit as the breath to the body;
If I should lose it, all my life is cold.
Why, what of that, I would not fear to face
The rush of battle, or the howl of storm;
I would not turn aside from any death
If I could stand between it and Orsino.
I've very often risked my life for his,
And would not fear to lay it down for him.
And this is all: a few weak, withering pangs,
And then a grave, a very quiet grave.
Perhaps Bianca might let fall one tear
For one who died for her—and there would be
A monument built o'er my memory
In the mind of Orsino. This is well—
Why, I am glad again.

Enter Orsino.

Orsino. Kind greeting to thee, dearest Marcolini.
I am rejoiced to end my separation
Which, sooth to say, has been unkindly long,
And appears longer.
Marcolini. Welcome, Count Orsino.
Orsino. Count me no Count, in counting me your friend.
Why, Marcolini, you are wondrous pale:
Is it this moonless twilight on your face
That so affrights your colour? Look on me,
Do I look like a ghost?
Marcolini. I am not well,
There is a kind of listless fever on me;
I thought not you would have perceived a change.
But heed it not.
Orsino. An anxious eye sees well.
Why, you look like an old apothecary,

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Compounding poisonous simples, savouring death.
Can you not smile upon me?

MARCOLINI. Yes, Orsino.

ORSINO. Prithee, look sad again—a bitter weeping
Were merrier than such another smile.

MARCOLINI. Think not on't, kind Orsino; thy return
Is unto me an excellent physician.
Oh, a friend's voice is like a cooling breeze
Playing about a sorrow scorched heart.
Oh, speak again, it comforts me.

ORSINO. My friend,
What grief is this you speak of?

MARCOLINI. Said I grief?
I meant it not; 'tis but a dull disease—
A kind of melancholy ague fit;
'Twill soon be past. Talk no more on't, Orsino.
These are brave news in Venice of our Doge.

ORSINO. I have heard nothing yet.

MARCOLINI. More victory!
The lion spreads his wings o'er the blue sea,
Wider and wider.

ORSINO. Do you call that—news?
Why, 'tis an old tale, ever in mine ears
Since I first put the pride into my step,
Knowing myself Venetian. How the sight
Of the fair city glads my wearied eye
After my wandering. All the other world
Is a dull desert to Venetian hearts.
And they fly back for ever, hovering here
Over the throne of the transparent sea,
Where their dear Venice sits so royally;
And leave their masters heartless.

MARCOLINI. Even so
We might erase the punishment of exile
Out of the book of penalties, for death,
Lingering death, is written there already.
There is a rumour now abroad in Venice
That one long banished has returned, and dwells
Here in disguise, in peril of his life—
The young Friuli. Wherefore start you so?

ORSINO. I would my father had not hated him.
It was an unjust anger—a dark sin.
Tell me this, Marcolini—do you think
A father's fault is ever visited
Upon his child?

MARCOLINI. That know not I, Orsino,
There are inscrutable decrees in heaven—

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Dark shadows cast around the flaming sword
Of justice, that its stroke is unforeseen.

ORSINO. Why, I am innocent. Friuli's blood
Is not upon my head. Can fathers leave
A legacy of guilt?

MARCOLINI. Why look you thus?
You tremble, Orsino. What unmans you so?

ORSINO. It is a folly—nothing, a mere thought,
A brainish fancy. Yet it troubles me.
I have been haunted by dark dreams of late.

MARCOLINI. Dreams, say you: why, a startle in your sleep,
If a bat's wing waves o'er your eyes, will make
You dream of killing and dying.

ORSINO. 'Tis not so;
I have my day-dreams too. Sometimes a chill
Comes on the darkness of my sleep, and then
A face looks out upon me, angry eyed—
The face of an old man, always the same,
Motionless, marble-like, with severe lip,
As it would speak, yet silent; 'tis a face
I never saw in life, and yet I know
It is Friuli; and sometimes beside
Shines through the gloom another, distantly—
A countenance of a boy, exceeding pale,
And sad, so sad, and it looks ever on me.
Oh, how I fear its melancholy look,
Reproachful, woebegone, and its cold eye
So very gentle sad!

MARCOLINI. See you these often?

ORSINO. Very often, whene'er I would be merry
Then they come; there, even in the chill moonbeam,
Methinks I see them now.

MARCOLINI. 'Tis very strange.

ORSINO. It is a folly. I will shake it off;
I will not see them. Pass away, dark shadows.
Ha, ha! they're gone—that's well. I did not think
They could have made so much of me a child;
'Tis that I am fatigued with journeying.
Good even, Marcolini; I would sleep.
I do not think they'll come again to-night.

MARCOLINI. I will attend you homewards.

ORSINO. Thanks, yet no;
I had rather be alone. Give you good-night.

[*Exit.*

MARCOLINI. So, so. It is a very painful world.
How is Orsino compassed and hemmed in
With this strange fear of the dead. In very truth,

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If this Friuli be returned, the ghosts
Might have a weapon; a debased Venetian
Stings like a trampled adder. Ho, Maso!
[*Enter* MASO. MARCOLINI *stepping into the gondola.*
Now silently—dip your oars deep—glide down
Towards the Carrara palace. Softly: well.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 3

The Square near the Rialto. Evening. Enter GIACOMO *and* MARINO. FRIULI, *meeting them.*

GIACOMO. Who goes there?
FRIULI. A man.
GIACOMO. Friuli, I think.
FRIULI. Ay, one who was Friuli.
MARINO. If he was, and is not, it is well for him; if he continue to hold companionship with his name, it is likely that his name will turn traitor to him. Now, if I were you, Friuli, I should tremble at my name. I would teach myself not to know myself. You'll find Friuli a dangerous friend in Venice. Cut him.
FRIULI. Then why do you call me Friuli?
MARINO. What should I call you?
FRIULI. Dog.
MARINO. An ambitious title. Well, Dog, you must out of Venice, Dog.
GIACOMO. You must, Friuli. It is known already that you are here; you cannot be concealed long.
MARINO. If you would not be a chained dog, away with you.
FRIULI. Do not fear. I am safe.
MARINO. Though you could kennel in a nutshell, Dog, you are not safe. There are those will give you a collar, Dog.
FRIULI. I tell you I am safe.
MARINO. And you are not Friuli, and Friuli is not you; then you are not yourself.
FRIULI. Very true.
GIACOMO. This is no time for trifling; you are discovered, you must be taken, and then there is but one word for Friuli—death.
FRIULI. What should I fear? Have not I told you I am not Friuli? He is a young noble, I believe, is he not? I am not noble—and he had a father, an honourable father. My father was a villain—a traitor, you know; I have none now. Friuli had a brother. I have none. I am not Friuli.
GIACOMO. Alas for him!
MARINO. Who are you, then?
FRIULI. What you call me—a dog.

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MARINO. If you stay in Venice you will soon be nothing.
FRIULI. Not so. I am under the protection of one who has power.
MARINO. You jest. Who would dare to protect a Friuli?
FRIULI. Oh, his very blood is warm with friendship to us. His family have been always distinguished well-wishers to mine. I lie under great obligations to his father. I hope, some day, to have the power of repaying them to the son.
GIACOMO *and* MARINO. Of whom speak you?
FRIULI. Of my very good friend, the Count Orsino.
MARINO (*recoiling*). How—under his protection?
FRIULI. Even so. I am his slave, but he does not know me.
GIACOMO. Oh, shame, shame! You had better have died in exile from Venice than lived in such exile from honour. That a Friuli——
MARINO. Peace, peace, you'll move him.
FRIULI. No; he speaks true—and zealously. Giacomo, the day will come when I shall wash my fouled scutcheon in blood.
MARINO. Stab him, and fly.
FRIULI. Not yet. I will drink deeper revenge.
GIACOMO. Let it be speedy. I pray you——
FRIULI. Let it be long. Stand close, my friends; I came by his order to meet him here. I think he is coming.
MARINO (*drawing*). Let the meeting be auspicious.
FRIULI. Put up your sword, Marino; do not draw, Giacomo. I pray you now—what—will ye—I command you. Am I your slave as well as Orsino's? Put up, I say; is Friuli so debased that his own vassals will not obey him? 'Tis well. Vanish! I would not be seen with you. Go—down yonder dark archway. I know ye can both be silent; do not attempt to palter with my vassals, they are faithless, and would betray us. Away.
MARINO (*aside to* GIACOMO). I will not go.
GIACOMO. You dare not disobey him.
MARINO. I dare everything for him. Go you, I will not.

[*Exit* GIACOMO.

MARINO *conceals himself under the arch.* *Enter* ORSINO.

FRIULI. The Count Orsino's vassal, poor Sebastian,
Welcomes him home, and hopes he is in health.
MARINO (*aside*). The slave!
ORSINO. Thanks, good Sebastian. Take this sword,
It cumbers me. Are not the shadows dark
And the air chill and full of dew to-night?
FRIULI. I feel it not, my lord.
ORSINO. You do not. Well,
Perchance it was my thoughts that were so cold.
So—so—I am afraid——
FRIULI. Of what, my lord?
ORSINO. O' the dead, Sebastian.

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MARINO (*aside*). Thou hast cause to fear
The dead, and living too.
ORSINO. Come near, Sebastian,
What are the news in Venice?
FRIULI. Few, my lord.
ORSINO. Is there not spread abroad a flying rumour
Of one returned from banishment for life?
FRIULI. Some such report there was. I do remember me
The name o' the fellow. Was it not—Friuli?
ORSINO. The same, the same, Sebastian; think you 'tis true?
MARINO (*aside*). Thou mayest know the truth of it, ere long.
FRIULI. It may well be, my lord.
ORSINO. Give me your ear;
I think he is mine enemy, although
I am not his.
FRIULI. And what of that?
ORSINO. I fear him.
FRIULI. Him, my lord? What can Count Orsino fear
From twenty such as he?
MARINO (*aside*). Answer *thou* that.
ORSINO. Why, ay, Sebastian, I believe Friuli
Might wisely fear the Count Orsino's fear.
MARINO (*aside*). Will he bear that? By my sword, like a dove.
Must I strike for him? Oh, thou lamb, thou spaniel——
ORSINO. I do not think I fear him, yet there comes
A shuddering o'er me when I hear his name.
FRIULI (*aside*). Have I sent forth my wishes to their work?
Methinks they are obedient—and able.
Is there such necromancy in my thoughts?
Have I the evil eye? It bodes me well.
ORSINO. Now, by mine honour, 'tis beneath Orsino
To fear a worm like him.
MARINO (*aside*). Oh, dead Friuli,
Cannot thy spirit draw the shadowy steel?
Must I hear more?
FRIULI (*aside*). Worm—am I—it may be—beware, Orsino,
Lest wormlike I should fill me i' the grave,
Feeding on death.
ORSINO. Now, by my father's vengeance,
I shall become all womanish, and fear
The ugly spider or the imoble[1] toad,
If I dread this Friuli.
MARINO (*aside*). Oh—no more.

[*He rushes out and makes a pass at* ORSINO. FRIULI *throws himself between them, then draws. Exit* MARINO.

[1] [So in the MS.; the old spelling of "immobile."]

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ORSINO. My trusty vassal, 'twas a fatal thrust
To parry with thy body. Art thou hurt?
FRIULI. Scratched—nothing—to save thee I had not cared
Had it been deeper.
ORSINO. Oh, you bleed, Sebastian;
And you are pale. The villain shall be taken!
I had rather caught the stab myself than you.
'Tis this way to the palace. Lean on me.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT II

SCENE 1

BIANCA'S *apartment in the Carrara palace. Evening.*
BIANCA. HELENA.

BIANCA. Take you the rubies from among my hair,
Their colour does not please me.
HELENA. Wherefore, madam?
BIANCA. Because it doth not; know you, I have reason
For such dislike, but it would trouble me
To search into my reason.
HELENA. Here are pearls.
BIANCA. What! wreathe my hair up with the spume of an oyster!
Leave them for anklets to the tanned Morescos.
I'll none o' them.
HELENA. Your sapphire coronet.
BIANCA. Give me the gems. How dull and dead they look.
HELENA. Nay, madam, they are bright and beautiful.
BIANCA. I had been looking at the sea: I would
The jeweller could freeze me a clear drop
Out of the Adriatic waves by night,
With a ray of starlight in't; there is no blue
To be compared with that: 'twould be a gem
Worthy the wearing of Venetian dames.
HELENA. *It* passes his art, lady.
BIANCA. Then I'll wear
No other gem to-night.
HELENA. Nay, lady, many of our Venetian nobles will meet in the dance to-night; 'twere fitting you should habit you as becomes——
BIANCA. As becomes whom? Bianca di Carrara
Doth not need jewels. I'll wear none of them.

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HELENA. You know the Count Orsino is returned.
BIANCA. Ay. What of him?
HELENA. He will be here to-night.
BIANCA. He is an honourable gentleman,
And with his presence honours us. Who else?
HELENA. Two or three senators.
BIANCA. I hate the senators!
HELENA. They are marvellously ill-favoured, lady. I should be afraid to meet one of them in the dark. I met a mask on the Rialto yesterday at dusk, with such an evil spirit in its eye, that I have been in a tremble ever since. I am sure it was a senator.
BIANCA. Coward, Helena!
HELENA. The faces of these senators are like so many brazen watch-cases, that hide the works inside.
BIANCA. Brave Helena!
HELENA. Why brave, lady?
BIANCA. To speak thus in Venice. Well, who else?
HELENA. Nobody.
BIANCA. How mean you, Helena?
HELENA. Why, there's the Signor—I forget his name—but he's nobody, an ace of a man. Then there's the Count Orsino's friend—no, I mean—the fellow to whom Count Orsino is a friend, for he himself can be nobody's friend. I believe he lives by hating.
BIANCA. Do you mean Signor Giuseppe?
HELENA. The same.
BIANCA.[1] He is a man most difficult to know,
For many do observe his words alone,
And they are harsh and haughty and severe,
And savour of a stern philosophy
That would make man a feelingless machine,
Having nor love nor hate nor any passion,
An unoffending, unforgiving thing,
Most proud, most just, most right, most merciless.
And yet, believe me, Helena,
For there are those have known it (and methinks
Even I can trace some vestige on his brow
Of feeling unerased), those words of his
Are but lip comers, who have never travelled
About the inner countries of his heart,
And foully do belie them. Though he seems
To walk the world alone, self severed
From all affection's ties, and from his seat
Of solitary pain to look abroad,[2]

[1] [This speech of Bianca was printed in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 32–33.]
[2] [So apparently in the MS. In the *Poems*, 1891, printed "around."]

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Like something not a man, upon the deeds
And thoughts of men who seem no more to him
His fellows, and to judge with eye severe
Of scornful mockery,—yet this stern Giuseppe
Can far more easily be, than find, a friend.

HELENA. I do not know, lady. He is a hard man. Do you think he can smile?

BIANCA. Yes, Helena.

HELENA. Then it's when he's in the very bitterness of scorn; yet there's a fellow who loves him—that Marcolini.

BIANCA (*starting*). Who, Marcolini?

HELENA. Ay, the poor, pale-faced gentleman, the melancholy fool; he is a very ass for loving that Giuseppe.

BIANCA. Go to, go to, Helena, by the mass, you are too forward.

HELENA. Why, lady?

BIANCA. You will sit cock-a-hoop—hey—you are [a] proper judgment passer, a worthy——

HELENA. Lady——

BIANCA. Now it angers me; you will pronounce your word on all the gentlemen in Venice, will you——

HELENA. Lady Bianca——

BIANCA.[1] I tell thee, Helena, young Marcolini
Is such a man as angels love to look on!
His heart is like a heaven, were it not
That it is oped to all,—he is so mild,
So pitiful, so gentle, that his thoughts
Go forth to judge the minds of other men
All dazzled by the light of his own love,
And see strange things i' the world:
Such as—benevolence in misanthropes—
Mercy in bravos—justice in senators,
And other such things incompatible!
Oh! 'twould be an exceeding lovely world
Were it what he supposes.

HELENA. Nay, lady, if you have taken upon you the office of general defender, I have done. I knew not Marcolini stood so high in your esteem.

BIANCA. And is he not most worthy, Helena?

HELENA (*smiling*). And to his other noble qualities
Adds he not one distinguished excellence
In that he loves the Lady Bianca well?

BIANCA. Think you so, Helena?

HELENA. I know it, lady. I have watched his eye
Grow bright as you drew near him, and eclipsed
In sadness if it saw you not; his lip
Smiling in joy, so deep, so melancholy,

[1] [This speech of Bianca was also printed in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. 33.]

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And all his mind a listening, listening,
Feeling the slightest murmur of your voice
Come musically o'er his thoughts. O lady!
Surely you know he loves you!

BIANCA. Was it for this
That you did call him, as I think, a fool—
A melancholy fool?

HELENA. Nay, if he were not so presumptuous,
He should be called most wise.

BIANCA. There's no presumption, Helena, in love:
It will not be bound down by line and rule,
That you should coldly say, I will, or will not,
Love such an one. Nay, it will curb the heart
To such an impotent subjection
That, even reft of hope, it shall continue
To feed on its own fire. At my suit, Helena,
You shall forgive him this most heinous sin;
I say you shall, for I do. Hark, they call me,
The guests must be assembled. Give me the gems,
There, that will do, the sapphire coronet,
If I must wear them. So. They call again.
I come.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2

A hall in the palace of COUNT ORSINO. FRIULI, *alone, on a couch, as wounded.*

FRIULI. Marino has served me well.
This stab was better aimed than he imagines,
And will soon rankle in mine enemy's heart,
Though struck through me. And I will pity none
Who come between my soul and her revenge.
This Marcolini—(*pausing*). I hate Marcolini,
Orsino loves him. Tell me, weak spirit,
Why thou wouldst pity him whom thou dost hate?
I will not pity him—I'll do't. I've said it.
Ha, ha! 'twill plague Orsino! Oh, sweet thought,
How the remorse will bite him!

Enter ORSINO *and* GIUSEPPE.

GIUSEPPE. Talk not to me of self devotion;
There is no self devotion in the world:
Our words and deeds all centre in ourselves.
You say this fellow caught in his own body
The weapon aimed at you—well, what of that,
It pleased him: as he bears you, I suppose,

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Some strong affection, as your spaniel does,
Loving, because he cannot choose but love,
Having no merit in't; and therefore taking
A pleasure in your safety, for which pleasure,
Mark me, his own sole gratification,
And not for you, he takes the stab upon him.

ORSINO. Yet, for all this, you shall not hinder me
From being grateful. [*He approaches* FRIULI.

GIUSEPPE (*aside*). That is but an impulse.
I have heard many talk of being grateful,
Which either means, they've so much devil in them,
Such biting pride, as not to bear the burden
Of any obligation unrepaid;
Or it means—nothing. I have not yet met
With such a thing. There is the Count Orsino,
Who fancies he is grateful. Fool! his heart
Will cool in an hour. All gratitude is but
An ephemeral blossoming, and the human soul
Is full of such a constant, keen-toothed, east
As nips it on the instant, leaving not
Even a perfume behind.
(*Approaching* FRIULI.) Doth your wound rankle deep, Sebastian?

FRIULI. Thanks, sir, it pains me not.

ORSINO. You thought, Sebastian,
That it was weak in me to fear Friuli.
Had you forgotten then that he could stab?

FRIULI. No, my lord, yet I think you need not fear it.
I am sure last night's fellow was not he.

ORSINO. How so, Sebastian?

FRIULI. Suppose, my lord, this rumour, which is but
Vague and uncertain, should indeed be true;
Suppose Friuli should be now in Venice,
It is his part to skulk in holes and corners
As bats do, for the light is dangerous
To such a fellow; 'twill be difficult,
With utmost caution, to remain concealed:
If it should once be known that he is here.
Then, even granting (what is most unlikely)
That he bear any enmity to you,
Seeing you have not injured him, dost think
That he by making such a foul attempt
Would draw the lightning eye of justice on him
When to be seen is death?—You cannot think it;
It is impossible.

ORSINO. And yet, Sebastian,
I have no other enemy.

GIUSEPPE. You know not.

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I tell you, Count Orsino, half the world
Is in sharp enmity with the other half;
They cross each other's paths and hate each other,
And each looks forth with a malignant eye
Upon his neighbour's fortune, which to blast
Is pleasurable increment of his own.
The world is like the rush confused of battle
When night comes sulphurous down, and through the gloom
All arms flash hostile, all who meet are foes,
In the fierce din of undistinguished war,
And each strikes madly for himself alone.

ORSINO. There is a black veil o'er your eyes, Giuseppe;
I'm no man's enemy, and I have found
Many a true friend.

FRIULI. My lord, there are mortal poisons
Have a sweet taste to the tongue. In the red desert
There is a certain wind, pleasant and cool
Unto the gasping lip and withered brow,
Yet death sits on't.

ORSINO. You speak in riddles, Sebastian.

FRIULI. Thus, my lord, would I read them; other things
Than love may cause a most urbane address,
With "dear Orsino," or "respected Count,"
Or "my good lord," or "my most honoured friend."
And enmity will often so approve
Itself with smilings hypocritical,
And humblest eye, and most obsequious mien,
That friendship's rude beside it, love unkind.

ORSINO. But I have injured no one.

GIUSEPPE. Nor Friuli,
Why therefore should you fix the stab on him?

ORSINO. I fear my father's guilt.

GIUSEPPE. 'Twere well, if all
Did fear his father's only. There would be
A lightening of consciences in Venice.
But, if you fear the fellow, Count Orsino
May with a glance look through the walls of Venice,
And pierce the secret city even to mouse-holes,
And crush the insect.

FRIULI (*aside, bitterly*). Thanks, most kind Giuseppe.
How very merciful Venetians are!
Yet these whose fear is judgment seem to hold
Me impotent to revenge.

GIUSEPPE. And for your *friends*,
Sebastian's in the right on't. Reckon them.
Have you cast any casual word of scorn
I' the teeth of any man, did he smile upon't,
As unresentful, in forgiving guise,

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Count not that man your friend. Or have you spoken
Of any, to another, in his absence,
As you might do with a contemptuous praise,
Such as doth mock with commendation,
And bite in kindness—mind you, words have wings—
Count not that man your friend. Or have you given
Good counsel unto any, which refused,
You may have taunted him with his misfortune,
As "Thus I told you it would be," "I knew it,"
"It had been better had you ta'en my counsel,"
Count not that man your friend. Or is there one
Whom you have injured, though it only were
A scratch upon his finger, who has seemed
Unmindful of it, with such words, perchance,
As "It is nothing," "I forgive you freely,"
"'Twas unintentional," "Pray you, speak not of it,"
Count not that man your friend. Or is there one
Whom your death or your ruin might advantage,
Even in so small a matter as a hair,
Count not that man your friend.

ORSINO. Oh, too severe,
I would not steel my breast with such mistrust
Even if I were a king. 'Twould be a hell,
Perpetual, unendurable to close
All avenue of kindly intercourse,
And pamper in black solitude such thoughts,
Half fear, half enmity to my fellow-men.
I do not doubt my friends, because I know
That I am worthy of them, and do love them.

GIUSEPPE. Count me them over. Doubt not I shall show
Your innocence some reason that may minish
Their estimated number.

ORSINO. The first, the last, the truest—Marcolini!

FRIULI. Stop there.

ORSINO (*starting*). Dog!

FRIULI. Be not so hot with poor Sebastian!

ORSINO. What did you mean?

FRIULI. Nothing, my lord—only—this Marcolini——

ORSINO. How—darest thou——

FRIULI. No, my lord, I do not dare
Even to speak, if you look on me thus;
I would not anger you. I cannot bear it.
What have I done?

ORSINO. Rather, what hast thou thought.
Art thou another infidel in good——

FRIULI. Nay, my lord. I'll not speak—I will not say
What 'twas I thought—I meant not to offend.

ORSINO. Out with thy pestilent thoughts, I order thee.

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FRIULI. Pray you to pardon me—'twas unadvised;
I will not interrupt again.
ORSINO. Wouldst mad me?
Speak, I command you.
FRIULI. It was nought, my lord,
Only your confidence in Marcolini
I was considering—why you were so sure
It was well placed.
ORSINO. Go on. (*Striking his brow.*)
'Tis well for thee that thou hast saved my life,
For else thou hast not dared, before my face,
To breathe one black word against Marcolini.
FRIULI. Do not be moved, my lord, for words of mine
Are nought against the truth of Marcolini
If he be true—as I do hope he is.
GIUSEPPE. You seem to speak as if your words meant more
Than they appear to signify.
ORSINO. Base slander.
What! shall this poison-mouthed cur presume
To bay at Marcolini!
GIUSEPPE. Good my lord,
Be not so hasty; love towards your friend
Might blind you to his treachery.
ORSINO. You too!
Now by mine honour 'tis too much to hear—
Yet I can take't from you, were he a saint
Pure, of the mountain air, thine evil eye
Would find some spot on his morality.
GIUSEPPE. Be calm, my lord, and you, Sebastian,
What cause have you that you should doubt the truth
Of such an honourable gentleman?
FRIULI. But this, my lord. I heard the Count Orsino
Himself remark the change in Marcolini,
That he was cold in manner and constrained,
As feeling not the welcome that he gave,
Sparing of words, formal in his address,
Restless and sad, and fearful in his look,
And altogether seemed to bear upon him
His friendship like an armour fitted ill,
As if it cumbered him.
GIUSEPPE. Was this so, Orsino?
ORSINO. Why, thus indeed it seemed, but thus was not,
For Marcolini said he was not well,
And therefore met me not with cheerfulness
As he was wont.
FRIULI. He might say so, my lord,
'Tis a good subterfuge.

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ORSINO. Out, foul-mouthed slave.
FRIULI. This is not all, my lord.
ORSINO. I'll hear no more.
Thou snail, thou insect, thou, couldst thou not leave
Thy slime on any other but my friend?
I will go ask his pardon, that I've listened
So long to thy base calumnies. Giuseppe,
I say I will not stay—I will not—Silence,
Thou viper, thou! [*Exit.*
GIUSEPPE. My lord, my lord Orsino (*following him*).
FRIULI (*alone*). 'Twill work, 'twill work. When next he meets his friend
His eye will watch him more suspiciously.
Oh, come, ye torturing and jealous thoughts
Into his spirit. Hurry from his heart
The calm repose of confidence secure,
I'll make suspicions of his dearest friends
Cling round his heart like black weeds on a ruin,
And hedge him in with evil dreams, and then—
Then—then—perhaps—— [*Scene closes.*

SCENE 3

St. Mark's Place. Night. Enter MARCOLINI *alone.*

MARCOLINI. Oh, feet, feet, where carry you your master? Legs, lend me your ears; I have no mind to go where you would take me. 'Twill be a merry company, and lovers are moonshine, and misty gentlemen, none of your light-heeled coxcombs—a weeping fraternity. What, will ye carry me on? Render me a reason, oh feet, for your pertinacity. Let me see—lovers are good in a merry company even as lemon juice in punch, but by themselves—intolerable—ergo—I will mix myself up with this merriment. Yet I am not by myself intolerable unto myself. Nay, I shall not shame the company. I am as gay as any cicada—could sing ballads through the streets—twenty ditties the ducat. (*Singing.*)

Upon my marriage day, lady,
Upon my marriage day,
My couch will be of clay, lady,
Cold, cold clay.
When the hymn is chaunting slow
Through the abbey door, lady,
I shall go, I shall go,
With my feet before, lady.

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Merry as a cicada, said I—that's a dull ditty to hit upon, yet the tune's merry; 'tis of a piece with the rest. Love always sings gaily—sets his pipe in a gay tune, yet there's a marvellous melancholy in his words—sometimes. Faith, the thing rings in my ears.

When the green sod doth me cover,
Give me but a tear, lady,
A sigh for thy lover
And a flower for his bier, lady.
'Tis for this thou shouldest weep
That beneath the cypress tree, lady,
His sleep will be so deep
That it will not dream of thee, lady.

How the devil do you know that, lover—yet 'tis pretty. Well, I think I'm in good fooling. I'll go—shall make an excellent masquerader. I can find out Bianca's mask by the bright eyes. How now—here comes Orsino. Oh heart, treacherous heart, thou who couldst once leap at the sound of his voice with joy, this thrill that passes through thee now is pain—pain—pain. Oh black, base heart, to wrong Orsino!

Enter ORSINO *and* GIUSEPPE.

GIUSEPPE. Peace, he is here—
Lo you, he comes not forward as he wont.
ORSINO. He doth not see us.
GIUSEPPE. Yet he looks upon us,
But with the vague and visionary eye
Of one who looks at images within,
Coined in the restless brain. Lo, his lips move:
Something disturbs him.
MARCOLINI (*coming forward*). Pardon me, Orsino.
ORSINO. I pardon thee? for what?
MARCOLINI. For thoughts, Orsino.
Methought I stabbed thee in a dream last night.
Will you forgive the dream, this cruel dream?
I waked myself with the agony.
GIUSEPPE (*aside to* ORSINO). Markst thou that?
Our dreams are but the echoes of our thoughts;
They are the imaginations of the day
That peep by night under the closed eyelid,
Or hover o'er our pillow.
ORSINO (*with a gesture of impatience*). Hadst thou toasted cheese for supper, Marcolini? 'tis a very murderous viand; many an awfully imagined crime is on the head of that same toasted cheese—oh, 'tis a wicked eatable. Pluck up thy spirit, man; dream me no more dreams.
GIUSEPPE (*aside*). Suppose he should turn them to realities.

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ORSINO. Thou mak'st me laugh, Giuseppe—what a raven art thou! Pray you, croak no more. Here's a fellow, Marcolini, has been doing all he can to persuade me that thou lovest me not.

MARCOLINI (*starting*). Ha!

GIUSEPPE (*aside*). Lo you, there—how he started, 'twas a conscience prick.

ORSINO (*angrily*). Peace, peace, Giuseppe.

MARCOLINI. I will not swear I love thee, dear Orsino—
There is no eloquence in full mouthed oaths;
I will not say I love thee—thou shouldst know it.
And wilt—some day—perhaps exceeding soon—
When I can love no longer—and this heart
May lie, affectionless, beneath a slab
Of the cold church marble.
Thou wilt not tread upon't, Orsino?

ORSINO. Are you going to mask to-night, Marc?

MARCOLINI. I care not.

ORSINO. Because you seem to be practising speeches. Let's hear it again—'twill do excellently well for a grave-digger.

MARCOLINI. Or a lover?

ORSINO. Sits the wind there—why, yes—let me see—thou'lt pass—thou'lt do—yet thou must shorten thy face a little, man, pluck up thy spirits, turn out thy toes—put more swagger in thy languishment.

MARCOLINI. What then?

ORSINO. Interrupt me not, Marc, thou dost turn aside the thread of my cogitation. Thou shouldest imitate me, Marc—I carry my love lightly.

MARCOLINI. So shall it be lightly esteemed.

ORSINO. Not a whit, man, not a whit; look you, I am growing upon it, and light upon it—so carry I my love lightly, but gaily and heroically.

MARCOLINI. 'Tis a light burden, Orsino.

ORSINO. Not so, my most melancholy gentleman in black. Wouldst thou have me become such a brown owl as thou, hooting of graves,—because I am in love? No, I will rant you and swear you with any lover in the universe, but will be none of your silent mopers. 'Twill not do, Marc, 'twill not answer.

GIUSEPPE. Truce with your fooleries, Orsino.

ORSINO. Truce with my fooleries! Now, according to my poor judgment, Signor Giuseppe, you and my black friend here, being serious fools, are fools in sober seriousness, asses in earnest, while I, being a merry fool, am but a fool in jest, and in earnest, a wiser man. He folds his arms and sighs, knowing no reason for it, an unreasonable fool—and thou dost shake thy head and frown, and as thy reason is more unreasonable than his no reason, still therefore art thou an unreasonable fool. Wherefore, we three partake of our folly in all good fellowship—and let

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his load be esteemed least, who carries it lightest. Look you, the moon is low—'tis late. Come, signors.

[*Exit.*

MARCOLINI *to* GIUSEPPE. Wilt thou go, evil spirit?
I know not why thou hast attempted this,
To lower mine honour in my friends' esteem.
'Twas base, Giuseppe,
And yet I can forgive all calumny
To thy dark mind, and heart affectionless—
How should it fancy what it cannot feel—
Or judge, save by the mean and pitiful standard
Of its own ignominious thoughts?
But think not I had thus forgiven thee,
But that thy enmity is to our love
As the weak acid on refined gold,
That brightens, but impairs not.

GIUSEPPE. It is well—
Thou canst not anger me. When thou hast past
A few more seasons of this weariness
Which men call life, and hast been trodden on,
Even as I, by the exulting heels
Of a hundred enemies, thy love despised,
Thy friendship or betrayed or slighted at,
Thy bright hopes crushed and withered, and thyself
Left like a wreck upon a lonely shore,
Lashed by the waves of agony; thy soul
Recoiling from the contact of all life,
To trust and lean upon its own despair,
And mock at its own misery, till the heart
Be numb and feelingless, in a living death;
When thou shalt be as I, thou'lt feel with me
That life is full of names for what is not,
And that the friendship and the love of man
Shine sweetly in the light of a young heart
As the clear bubbles on yon dancing sea
Most beautiful—but full of nothingness,
Perishing in a moment.

MARCOLINI. Oh, Giuseppe,
What words are there which I could not forgive
To one so miserable.

GIUSEPPE. Wilt thou come?
Orsino waits us.

[*Exeunt.*

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ACT III

SCENE 1

A splendid apartment in the Carrara palace. Enter BIANCA *hurriedly, in a splendid mask.*

BIANCA. Helena! Helena! Quick! here, Helena!

HELENA (*entering*). Yes, lady.

BIANCA. Hark you, I would not be known in the masque. Get me a plainer dress, and thou shalt take mine——

HELENA. I!

BIANCA. You; quick about it.

HELENA. But, lady——

BIANCA. No buts; thou shalt hear some pretty speeches, I warrant thee, composed during all last month, half-an-hour to a sentence, to be delivered extempore. Oh, thou shalt hear some sweet metaphors.——

HELENA. What should I say, Lady Bianca?—I cannot—'tis impossible.

BIANCA. Very possible; thou shalt but take this dress—look, you are much about my height. I have a reason for't, wench—I am sick of elegant periods, surfeited with languishing looks, tired to death of modulated voices—in short, would fain be unknown. Do thou but walk stately, and speak haughtily, or rather be silent, haughty, and speak laconically, and 'twill answer excellent well. About it—how I shall laugh to see the Count Orsino whispering to you.

HELENA. But indeed——

BIANCA. Quick, this way, or they'll be here—this way. It shall be so, Helena.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE 2. *The same*

Enter LORD CARRARA, *and* MASQUERS, ORSINO, MARCOLINI, *and* GIUSEPPE.

LORD CARRARA. Welcome, my friends and guests. Signor Giuseppe,
I am right glad that you do honour me
Thus far. I had not even hoped to see
You at our festive meeting, for I thought
That you were wont to hold yourself aloof
From all such—as you called them—vanities:
The favour unexpected is the greater.

GIUSEPPE. Thanks, my good lord, I scarce know why I came.
'Tis little, as I fear, for others' pleasure,

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And little for mine own; but I came, led
By Count Orsino.

LORD CARRARA. Then, it seems, to him
We are doubly debtors—for himself and you.
You, Count Orsino, and your other self,
The Signor Marcolini, I should hope,
Required not assurance of my welcome.
What—you do mask to-night, then rest you merry:
Some music, ho, some music soft, but gay,
Such as the drowsy fisher, half in dreams,
Hears from the blue waves in the silent night
Rising and falling with the pure sweet voice
Of mermaids mingled, and half melancholy,
And chorus low of sounding hollow shells
Dancing along the water—music—ho.

[*Music.* MARCOLINI *and* ORSINO *mingle among the* MASQUERS.

And you and I, Giuseppe, will sit here
Like stranded vessels, now too old for sea,
And look upon the mirth in which we join not.
'Tis not so long—since I led out a dance;
'Tis some twelve years ago—nay, even now,
I do not think my heart has grown so heavy
That my legs could not carry it—and you
Are scarce encumbered with my years,—I think.

GIUSEPPE. No, my lord, but each year of mine has laid
His cold hand heavily upon my heart.
It little matters how few fleeting summers
Increase the body's age, when every one
Drags on the mind into a withered Autumn,
And frets the fresh youth of the soul away.

LORD CARRARA. And how have they done this to thee, Giuseppe?
Hast thou been grieved with many things?

GIUSEPPE. My lord,
That which has been—has been. I care not now
For anything which hath been—(*pausing*)—or shall be.
I may have grieved—I shall not grieve again;
I may have loved, but I shall love no more;
I may—have hated, but I hate none now.
I have not felt my heart beat, many a year;
It knows nor pain nor pleasure—'tis all hard.
Orsino there believes that I do love him,
And so I do, but more disinterestedly
Than men love usually—for, mark, my lord,
I should not care were he to die to-night,
Nor would my countenance be sad to-morrow;
And yet, to pleasure him (nor him alone—
For I would do the same for many others)

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I'd dig into the bowels of the earth,
Leap careless i' the green waves o' the sea,
Or thrust my head in fire, or face undaunted
Torture and death—and yet I do not love them.
Their presence is no gladness unto me—
I am alone, strangely alone in the world;
There's not a link 'twould give me pain to break,
There's not a voice that I do love to hear,
There's not an eye that mine would seek to meet,
And there is such a cold, cold silence in
This echoless, dark, and deathful breast of mine,
That I have sometimes thought grief, like a vampire,
Had even sucked the immortal spirit out,
Had withered in its tenement like a leaf,
And left my corpse like body to walk the earth
Moved by a damnèd and unnatural life,
Like churchyard housed goule.[1]
I do not grieve—
Nothing would give me any sorrow now;
And yet I do not think that there are many
Who for such strange impunity from pain
Would choose to be as I am.

Lord Carrara. Perhaps, my friend, were you to mingle more
In the festivities of other men,
And issue from the solitude in which
You harbour, as the tortoise in his shell,
And give no entrance to such sable thoughts
As now do move their dark and shadowing wings
Across your lonely brain, this fell disease
(For 'tis disease, Giuseppe) might be minished,
And a deep sobbing spirit like a sea
Wave gentle surges in your breast again.

Giuseppe. Go forth into the world?—a proper remedy!
'Tis true that I can laugh, when I look forth,
Or mingle in the intercourse of men;
But in the laughter is small merriment.
See you the dancers there; many a light heart
Moves in the mingled circle, like a flower,
Red with a flush of youth, all glittering
With pleasant dews of gladness. Let a few
Vanishing years pass by, and many a one
Will beat no more, and the exulting limbs
Have stiffened strangely. There is beauty there,
Many a glorious eye, and silver brow,
And delicate cheek, where the quick thoughts are seen
To pass like summer lightning rosily:

[1] [Old spelling for "ghoul."]

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But, a few years—they'll be in a cold climate,
Where fine complexions are all browned a bit,
Not by the sun, I fancy. Ha, ha, ha!
There is much food for merriment i' the world!
Watch you the countenances passing by,
All smiling, are they not, all wondrous gay;
But who shall see the villanous work within,
The secret grief, the maddening jealousy,
The sickening envy, and all feelings foul
Coiling and twisting, like to charnel worms,
About the black corruption of the heart?
Oh, for a knife that would dissect a soul!
'Twould be a merry sight, to cut and carve
A spirit, and to see what rascally stuff
Men's minds are made of. I could laugh enough
Here in the masque; but it is merrier yet
Out in the populous city—where the song
Is stopped by the dagger, and a hundred forms
Of Proteus death look out from holes and corners
With horrible glance, and gather from the crowd
Harvest of lives; when the quick, living tread
Of some unhappy one stops suddenly,
Leaving a silence—heard no more for ever.
Where the pale mists, that from the sleeping sea,
Like breathings of an infant, silently,
Distil among the heaven dropping dew,
Are full of life—instinct with souls of men—
Moaning and mingling with an evil influence
In the cold gusts breathed by their murderers;
Or where the hypocrite waves, beneath their brightness
Do keep foul secrets well, and scaly fish
Do munch and nibble at the bloodless bodies
That held in spirits yesterday. Ha, ha!
There is much food for merriment i' the world!
'Tis a fine remedy for a chilly heart
To wander forth among benevolent men,
And see the hypocrite and the murderer
Rising on ruins, fattening on destruction,
Like the dank weeds or iron-armed ivy
That grows so green on ruined edifices;
To see the darkly smiling senator

[ANTONIO *enters behind.*

Work his wild will upon all innocent men,
And as he strikes his victim in cold blood,
With unimpassioned eye and gentle lip,
Calling his murders justice——

ANTONIO (*coming forward*). Hush, Giuseppe!

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'Think'st thou the ear of Venice is asleep
In masque, or midnight revel, or one thought
Concealed from her inevitable eye?
Nay, fear not me, my will is not so wild—
I am an unimpassioned senator:
Your thoughts are safe with me. I am your friend;
But speak no more such words. There are other ears
Than mine, and quicker; and the midnight air
Is full of tongues to tell out secret things—
Beware! [*Mingles among the* MASQUERS.

GIUSEPPE. My friend, he said it may be so;
Yet it were strange. 'Tis well—I stand rebuked—
I crave your pardon. I know well, my lord,
My words befit not this festivity;
And such a thing as I am, in the midst
Of joyfulness, is like the rotting skull,
The wine zest of the Mede.[1] I'll speak no more.

Enter LADY BIANCA *and* HELENA, *masqued.* ORSINO *approaches* HELENA *and takes her aside.*

MARCOLINI (*observing them*). She hath indeed a semblance of Bianca,
But not the airy step, or goddess form.
Thy love is blind indeed, my friend Orsino,
To be so dazzled by a rich apparel.
What, she doth speak? Oh, little moving voice!
Had it been hers, it had come o'er my heart
With a quick startle and a thrilling pain,
Yet sweet as the west wind, all sick with perfume.
It is not her.
(*Approaching* BIANCA) This is a plainer masque,
Methinks the casket holds a rarer jewel.
(*To her*) Lady, there's such a loadstone in my heart,
But it doth ever paint me true to thee.

BIANCA. Is there no variation in't?

MARCOLINI. Oh, none.
It is so fixed, so constant pointed, lady,
I am like a bewildered mariner
Upon a deep and desert-billowed sea;
And still it points my everlasting look
To the clear star of love.

BIANCA. 'Tis a good compass.
Hath it no change?

MARCOLINI. Oh, 'twill be always true,
Ay—even into the deep, dim, twilight time,

[1] [See "The Scythian Banquet Song," above, p. 57.]

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That 'twixt the day of life and night of death
Spreads its uncertain horror.

BIANCA. But so long?
'Tis a short "always." Why, I've heard such vows
As would shame yours to blushing, gentle Signor;
You must go school your life to say "for ever,
For ever, and for ever"—with quick doubling,
And talk about eternity, before
You think to prosper in a dame's goodwill.
Why, there is scarce a signature of a name
Placed at the bottom of a cold epistle
Without the asseveration—Yours till death.
Is that all you will swear to?

MARCOLINI. Even so,
They are the poor in heart, the light in love,
Who deck with oaths a little during passion,
Who think they feel—as they can never feel—
And mock the love they do so little know
With their thick-strung, vain vows, and swelling words.

BIANCA. That may be, gentle Signor, yet it sounds
Exceeding well, and has a better chance,
Methinks, of being listened to with favour
Than your most measured, moderate expression.
Now would I gage my glove, the Count Orsino
By this time has poured out so much sweet nonsense,
Seasoned with such enchanting lovers' oaths,
Into that lady's ear, that had your words
Heard them, they had died for envy, leaving you
Voiceless, incapable to plead.
(*Aside*) Pray heaven
He turn not Helena's brain, and make her fancy
She is Bianca, and I Helena.

MARCOLINI. Oh, lady——

BIANCA. Well, that sounds something better. Speak, I listen,
And let there be no want of "ohs" and "ahs"
To make your speech melodious.

MARCOLINI. Lady Bianca.

BIANCA. No personalities, if you please; my name,
For aught you know, may not be Lady Bianca.
Besides, I told you to begin with Oh:
That word is to the rest of a set speech
Even as a gentleman at whose introduction
You tolerate a shabby friend or two.

MARCOLINI. Nay, lady, I will not obey you, lest
Your sweet voice should not interrupt again.
Oh, let me hear you speak, and speak—until
My soul be filled with the voice, all rapturous

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With beauty of sweet sound. Yet hear me, lady,
I have a tale to tell thee, sweet Bianca:
Wilt listen to't?

BIANCA. Ay, if 'tis not too long
I'll not be wearied. I'll curtail your tale,
If I do find it wordy.

MARCOLINI. 'Twill not need.

[*Unfinished.*]

SCENE 3

A retired place. Enter GIACOMO *and* MARINO.

MARINO. I tell you—it was most villanous—Giacomo! I would have planted me the poniard in his pectoral artery. I would have treated him as mortally as any doctor in Christendom—and to be baulked thus. 'Sdeath! the milk-and-water knave—the obedient ass—he deserves to be minced up for Orsino's dinner.

GIACOMO. Peace, peace, Marino—thou speak'st unadvisedly.

MARINO. I speak unadvisedly, do I—thou water-melon, thou? Art thou a man—hast thou soul in thee—is't not enough to make any one speak unadvisedly—hast thou heard—hast thou seen—hast thou understood, and dost thou tell me I speak unadvisedly? Who spoke last night à la dog? Who called Orsino master—dear master—was that speaking unadvisedly? Who held the Count Orsino's sword? Who carried the Count Orsino's cloak? Who obeyed the Count Orsino's words? Who prevented the Count Orsino's death? Was't a Friuli—was it my lord Friuli—sir Giacomo? Do I speak unadvisedly—thou cucumber?

GIACOMO. Thou art mad, Marino.

MARINO. Mad—am I not mad in reason—is it not reasonable to be mad—should I not be mad if I were reasonable.—Cowardly knave—crouching, paltry——

GIACOMO. Prithee, peace, Marino, we shall have all the town about our ears. Is he not our Master—our Lord? What right have we to criticise his actions?

MARINO. Criticise his actions! Pickle him for a gerkin. Why, the right of men, Giacomo—the right of honour. Honour! he knew the meaning of that word once. Faith, it's out of his dictionary now.

GIACOMO. 'Tis in his heart, Marino (I do know him
Better than thou), although perchance it may
Have there a somewhat strange companionage.

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MARINO. Why, I could once have thought it. (*Pausing*) But not now.
Was not his blood upon my sword last night?
Yet I struck not at him—he came between us—
Oh, most contemptible—he came between us—
I tell thee, he did—Giacomo!

GIACOMO. Be it so,
Perhaps he did not choose to delegate
His vengeance to another.

MARINO. Tut, *his* vengeance—
He is dishonoured doubly deep, Giacomo,
Hath sunk himself to the level of a slave;
He hath no right to exact vengeance now
From one above him. Oh, I had done well,
And like a faithful vassal, had I struck him
Heart deep—and with my so benevolent blow
Oblivioned the disgrace of a Friuli.
The last, one scion of a lofty house
To bow his crested head down to the dust,
Humbling himself before his enemy's look—
To blot his barless scutcheon with such infamy
As trafficking Jews would shrink from. Oh, I could weep,
Were it not womanish, o'er such a ruin.
Him and his house I have loved passing well—
How well it matters not—my cares are over.
Alas! there is no duty now for me,
And the dim twilight of Friuli's fortune
Is lost in night for ever—such a night
I had not dreamed of. Oh, it shall not be!
I'll poison him or stab him—anything
To murder his dishonour. I would cast
His body in the melancholy sea;
No monument should ever name his name:
Men should not know where slept the last Friuli.

GIACOMO. Truly, Marino, if such be the part
Of faithful vassal, as you call yourself—
Preserve me from your honesty, say I.[1]
Your faith now, in my opinion, is a very rascally minded character—and your dishonesty, if you look to the common sense of the matter, is much more respectable company.

MARINO. Base hind——

GIACOMO. Nay, no bad words, Marino, not so base neither. All I mean to say is—that I had rather be served with a dinner by your serving-man, rascality, than with a dagger by your gentleman, honesty.

MARINO. Dost thou laugh, Giacomo?

GIACOMO. Laugh—ay, and let the world run. Frown not on me,

[1] [In the MS., "Preserve me from your honesty, say I, that's all."]

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Marino. I'll answer for him, our master will like Giacomo for laughing at him, better than Marino for poisoning him.

FRIULI (*entering*). Answer not thou for me, for if thou dost
Thou mayst be deceived. [*He looks at* MARINO.

MARINO (*confused*). Thou know'st, my master,
For whom I meant the stab——

FRIULI (*smiling*). Ay, but for whom
Dost thou intend another?

MARINO (*more confused*). I intend?

FRIULI. Yes—I say thou. What—art thou pale, Marino?
Thou think'st I overheard thee.

MARINO. Pardon—Master.

FRIULI. Dost thou then think, Marino, I esteem
Thy thoughts as doth Giacomo? I know thee,
And heard the outburst of thine indignation
With gratitude. Alas! I have but few
To love me now; methinks 'tis melancholy
That the last boon their love can wish for me
Should be the grave. It is a little sad,
Or would be, to another heart than mine,
That all the brightest hopes of my best friends
For me should have their eyes fixed there.
[*Pointing to the earth.*
They say that hope is such a spirit of life,
It mocks at possibilities, remaining
Amidst the death of other thoughts and feeling,
Even as the immortal soul doth rouse itself
Out of the twilight of a shadowy sleep
Into quick dreams—living for ever and ever.
Is it then come to such a pass with me
That this undying hope, this dreamy thing
That flickers in a quick and changing fire
Like to a crown about the brow of madness—
That fixes its far gaze on thrones and clouds,
And fills the night of misery with stars
Of thought, which mock with their cold quivering
Of light unreachable; that this which comes
To other men in such a gentle guise,
Should wear, to me, the semblance of a skull,
And point me, with its melancholy finger,
Downwards to silence?
(*Pausing*) I do love that hope—
As I have loved the beautiful in death.
When o'er the brightness of the burning eye
The mist comes like a sleep upon a life,
And light and loveliness breathe fearfully
A brightness o'er the features—which is death—

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FRIULI. What does it matter where? I used to love
To meet it anywhere. 'Twas on a slab
Of marble, I had trodden on, i' the floor
Of the Church of St. John and Paul.
MARINO. Alas! too true.
FRIULI. Methinks she was as pretty a piece of clay
As ever became a toy for that grim child
Who sits beneath the earth, inweaving spirits
Like pearls in his black hair.
GIACOMO. She did grow pale,
Even like a dream of the dead, from the dark day
When thou wert exiled, and was wont to sit
Upon the extremest, undecided point
Of Lido's lengthened cemetery shore,[1]
Looking along the sea, like to the shadow
Of a lost hope that measured its despair,
Until her eye grew dim with its weak watching,
And her ear numb with the dull dash of waves;
Until the island fisherman complained
That she did bring a curse upon the shore
By her weak cries unto the wintry night.
They went and took her from the strand, they said
In pity, and immersed her in a chamber
Within the dark and desolated pile
On yon small island.[2]
FRIULI. Oh, not there!
GIACOMO. Ay, there.
FRIULI. Fiends! I will tear them limb from limb—mine own,
My bird of beauty—to lie there—amidst
Demoniac howlings, cursing fits, and cries
Of melancholy madness—to be shown
Like a beast behind its bars—*she* pointed at—
She violently used and scorned of men.
GIACOMO. Be calm—it was not long—and she was meek
And gentle in her madness, and was fond
Of flowers, and would gaze on them, and smile
If they were pale and wildly grown, long time;
And sometimes muttered words that made her weep,
Or sat beside her window with its bars,
Twining her hair and singing to the sea;
And many other modes of innocent grief
Would she express—unreasonably sweet,
For a few months, and then they buried her
In consecrated ground, and laid a stone
Over her head, and left her to her peace.

[1] [See above, p. 454.]
[2] [The island of S. Servolo, containing the madhouse—the "windowless, deformed, and dreary pile" described by Shelley in *Julian and Maddolo*.]

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FRIULI. I had a dream that she was half immortal,
A creature of imperishable light.
Oh, can the breathing of her beauty be
All motionless, all fearfully obscure
In charnel habitation?
The feeling of her hand is as in mine,
The quiver of her kiss is on my lips,
The blueness of her eye is in my brain—
Her spirit is within me, it is mine.
Oh, mercy! is the wet, cold, ropy sand
Clotted in her dark hair?
GIACOMO. Thou art too weak.
MARINO. Thou calledst us to give us some command
That needed a true heart, or a sharp sword;
The dawn is grey on Lido—this is not
An hour to spend in wailing. Hast thou deeds,
I am here—if not, farewell.
FRIULI. I tell ye, vassals,
I've the Friuli in me yet—'twas well
Ye minded me of her, for there is that
Which I would do, that hath much phrenzy in't,
Which, methinks, now, I am fit for. I did speak
Of the Carrara's daughter. It is known,
Or I know, that this Marcolini, of whom
Orsino is so diligent, doth worship her;
And, I have information which I doubt not,
His goddess bends no scornful eye on him.
Now, fortunately for my purposes,
Orsino hath some fancy towards the maiden,
Slight, as I think, enough; yet quite as much
As might be cavalierly borne: I warrant,
None of your killing fancies, yet—I know
The measure of his quick temperament
And opposition—or the merest hint
Of another's more prosperity of passion,
Will work him into such hot jealousy
As I can use with much convenience.
Be it your business, then, to dog the steps
Of Marcolini, bring me evidence
Of passages of slight encouragement
To him from the Carrara. Anything
How slight soever—as a flower let fall,
A casement open at a certain hour,
A note of music delicately sung,
The wave of a white hand—record to me
All that you see and hear which, well detailed,
With all appurtenance of place and time,

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By me, at chosen moments, in short space,
Will irritate, if not convince Orsino.
Then, Marcolini must grow cold to one,
His confessed rival, and when things have come
This length, I'll work with more decision on
The anger of Orsino—'twill require
Only a word of coldness from Bianca
To finish that which I have well begun.
The alienated friend is dangerous:
A twilight hour, an interrupted meeting,
A solitary shore, you understand?

MARINO. Ay, well!

FRIULI. Or, the Orsino has some trusty bravos
May take the trouble off his hands, and then
A secret paper in the Lion's mouth—
I'll see to that—and thus Orsino falls
Dishonoured, in dishonourable death,
Tortured besides with agonised remorse
For Marcolini's death. Is't not well planned?

MARINO. Too well for me.

FRIULI. How now, my hot blood friend!
Is thy fire only in thy words—that thus
Thou shrinkest from the point of my behest?
Shall this less zealous fellow prove himself
More useful at a pinch?

MARINO. Let him, for me;
He's just a dog of such a sneaking nose,
As fits a piece of work like this. Nay, Master,
I fain would think myself an honest man
Even in mine anger. For your fine-laid schemes,
Destroying those who have not injured you,
Traversing by innumerable winds
The short space lying between this and this—
[*Pointing at the hilt and point of his dagger.*
I do not understand, and love them not.
If you have any forward work in hand
Needing a faithful heart, or a bold arm,
Then let me serve thee, as a true man may;
I pray you make me not a midnight spy
On love-sick girls.

FRIULI. Away—thou troublest me;
Divide the duty as ye will. My house
Has but a brace of servants; if they know not
Their places, 'twill go hardly with the master.
Be here to-morrow—even at this same hour.
Giacomo—remember—all. Know all.
Away! [*Exeunt* MARINO *and* GIACOMO.

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These spectre cypresses do gaze on me,
As with death-darkened eyes, and from the shore
The following surges cry to me. Dark ocean,
Methinks thou lookst unkindly upon one,
Who will soon feed thy famine sweetly. Peace
Be to the horror of thy silent blue!
Would I were ready to lie down with thee—
With thee and thy calm company of bones
Weed shrouded; gentle nurse and mother mine,
Wilt thou not kill me, when my work is done
And I am weary? [*Exit.*

SCENE 4

A chamber in the Orsino palace. Enter ORSINO *and* GIUSEPPE.

GIUSEPPE. How now, Sir Moth! did thy fiery piece of attraction scorch thy wings, that thou art now so earthward inclined—who wert yesternight as fluttering a fool as ever became sheath for cold steel—or fly to a fair lady's web?

ORSINO. I would the threads had been finer, old Wormwood—the coarser wove, the easier broken—and I care not for freedom from so fair entanglement.

GIUSEPPE. Now, St. Antonio preserve thee from the entanglement of thine own brains. What did she say to thee, boy?

ORSINO. Nothing.

GIUSEPPE. Truly, an innocent maiden! What did she hear?

ORSINO. More nonsense than she deserved.

GIUSEPPE. It hath then been an immortal example of innocuous colloquy. Truly, the conversation held between nothing and nonsense is likely to be edifying intercourse. Yet I see not the strangeness of this, Sir Count. If she gave thee an attentive ear and a bright eye, methinks thou wert answered; and for the quality of thine own tropes, methinks thou wert answerable.

ORSINO. Doth it not delight thee—Wormwood—to perceive any gentleman of thy acquaintance suspecting himself of being an ass?

GIUSEPPE. Thou hast said——

ORSINO. For which cause, and on account of which predilection, thou hast seldom cause to be marvellous merry.

GIUSEPPE. Oracular.

ORSINO. Then do I bid thee rejoice, for I have had lately much inclining unto a certain purple-tipped thistle, which may the winds disseminate where they list.

GIUSEPPE. Once and again, boy, I would know how the fair plant so pricked thy fingers.

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ORSINO. Once and again, Wormwood, I scarce know. There is no grace in her, Wormwood, nor there is no wit in her—nor there is no scorn in her—she is all inert—and she hath cooled me into parallel inertness—she hath a very witless giggle—she did speak as if she would fain have spoken pearls, but if they were, then am I a swine. She did move with no dignity, but with a quick plebeian shake—jerking up her neck and fluttering of her mask—replying withal with an insinuating "Nay, now," or an "Oh, sir." Pest! I had as soon court her waiting-maid.

GIUSEPPE (*aside*). This fellow hath a fine feeling, but 'tis pity of his common sense. Listen, Sir Count: How do these attributes which your indignation has detailed tally with the name of Bianca di Carrara—with the daughter of a house, of whose ancestral hands one tore the laurel from the brow of Attila? Dost thou believe thine eyes, which, after all, told thee a tale only of a known mask—and a jewelled dress, rather than thy heart, which, if it be as true an index of what is noble in mien or word, as I believe it to be, is not a party to the deception that befooled thy brain? Thou who knowest so well the beauty of nobility in woman, thou who canst read so readily the scutcheon on her brow, think not that the maiden of Carrara will be a mockery of thy mind or of thy heart.

ORSINO. I tell thee, I observed her closely.

GIUSEPPE. Fool! then thou didst observe nothing but a masquerade dress.

ORSINO. Ha!

GIUSEPPE. Mark me, for an old man's eyes, if not keen, are sure. There was one in the mask last night who had a finer sense than thou, for he singled out among the glitter of jewels a plain dark mask, that was royally worn, and they two conversed low and long. Thou might'st be deceived, Orsino, but nor his love, nor my observation. By the pride of her step, by the gentleness of her mien, by the beauty of her motion, by the brightness of her eye, it was Bianca!

ORSINO. Confusion!

GIUSEPPE. Ay, it was confusion on thy part. Why she should have disguised herself, perhaps thy fertile fancy may conjecture; I trouble not myself about the matter.

ORSINO. Who was it? (*Laying his hand on his hilt.*)

GIUSEPPE. It?—he, you mean. Why, ay, there's the question—and a question let it remain.

ORSINO. 'Sdeath! Giuseppe, I must know.

GIUSEPPE. Nay, then—go to Bianca—tell her you have conceived a marvellous inclination to run a certain gentleman through the body—she'll tell you.

ORSINO. Madness! Mocked! deceived—I would not bear it from a princess! Who was it, Giuseppe?—by Heaven, I'll know!

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GIUSEPPE. One of the ten friends you have at your fingers' ends.

ORSINO. Friends! I'll lay him under the Adriatic before the sun— The name—the name——

GIUSEPPE. Softly, Sir Count. In good time, here comes his gondola. Look!—it turns down your private canal—don't run him through at the door, though; you may repent of too much hospitality. Hark! his step—he comes.

ORSINO. Fury! (*Rushing to the door; it opens. Enter* MARCOLINI; *he staggers back.*)

MARCOLINI. How now! Hold you a fencing match here?

ORSINO. Marcolini!

MARCOLINI. Well, what of him?

ORSINO. You!

MARCOLINI. What am I—a thunderbolt?

GIUSEPPE. Your friend's gone mad, Marcolini, for no other reason that I know of than because his eyes are not over and above clear-sighted.

MARCOLINI. 'Tis a calamity incident to mortals. What testifies of the aberration of his wit?

GIUSEPPE. A kind of—dulness in the cognizance of his best friends.

MARCOLINI. Then is the world a fair lunatic asylum. What ails thee, Count?

ORSINO. Thou!

MARCOLINI. This is monosyllabic madness.

ORSINO. Tush! I am a fool!

GIUSEPPE. How many times may a man discover so astonishing a fact, while his admiring repetitions proclaim him faithless in his own foolery?

MARCOLINI. Orsino, a word with you.

ORSINO. Not now, I pray you.

MARCOLINI. Not now, my friend, wherefore? Now ask thyself, Orsino, might I not justly think this strange? Instead of thine open hand and loving brow, I meet a drawn sword and a compressed lip; instead of our glad communication, which withal ought not to be the colder for a few months' separation, there is that in thy word and look which a weaker, or a fiercer spirit than mine, or a less truthful, might believe something like estrangement; ir sooth, Orsino, this is not well!

ORSINO. It is not well, indeed, dear Marcolini.

MARCOLINI. Thou art thyself again.

ORSINO. Oh no, and yet— Not now—I cannot speak to thee—ther matter hath disturbed me much, yet 'tis no fault of thine meet thee after. I am pained now. [*Exit*

MARCOLINI. Is this thy work? (*To* GIUSEPPE.)

GIUSEPPE. No, Signor Black-doublet.

MARCOLINI. 'Tis like it.

GIUSEPPE. 'Tis the work of a lighter hand—of a fing

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entangled as many friendships—as it has scorched hearts—and killed flies like you, my merry Sphinx Atropos.

MARCOLINI. Read me thy riddle.

GIUSEPPE. Tush, Sir Lack-wit, 'tis their own work, and thou canst best undo thine own handling. Trouble not thy friend while the moon's at the full. Away! Yet mark me, I was on Lido last night, and a body came ashore. It was but a fisherman, a fellow who was fond of taking the wind out of others' sails. There was a hole in his breast; I suppose he's kicked in again by this time. Farewell! [*Exit* GIUSEPPE.

MARCOLINI. Giuseppe—listen.

GIUSEPPE. Farewell!

MARCOLINI. Stay, Giuseppe. Heavens! [*Exit.*

SCENE 5

An apartment in the Carrara palace. LORD CARRARA, LADY CARRARA, LADY BIANCA.

LORD CARRARA. Daughter, the Orsino is a gentleman,
Proper as any in Venice, representative
Of a house as aged as ours. I know him well,
And in him I know honour as unstained,
And as majestic in its influence, as
The swell of our blue Adriatic waves.
All this I had made little mention of,
But that he bears, as far as heart can guess,
Or mine can show, or tongue can utter it,
A true affection tow'rd you. Smile not, daughter,
'Tis not a thing so easy to be gained,
Even by thy fair dark eyes. With commendation
Like this, I leave him. No paternal threat,
Nor anger of authoritative counsel,
Shall gyve thy preference an inch, or leave
Thy gentle heart unknowing to rebel
In sickened acquiescence.

LADY CARRARA. Thou'rt too mild, my lord,
After her folly of last night.

LORD CARRARA. No folly
That I see, save in Count Orsino's wit,
Which it has proved less sharp than I had fancied;
The girl but chose a plainer mask. 'Tis seldom
That women's folly points that way. In sooth,
The trick of the maiden made me laugh.

LADY CARRARA. Perhaps it may make the others laugh. Your friend,
The Misanthrope, would smile in his own way,

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To hear her jest had caused some moonlight work
Fit for the Lion's teeth.

BIANCA. Oh, say not so,
Dear mother—do not dream it.

LORD CARRARA. Fear not, maiden,
Thou hast well hooded thy young hawks; yet who
Was he who had the truer eye or heart?

LADY CARRARA. That can I tell you; it was one—her eye
Should not have fallen on—and it shall not either.
For this can I tell you—maiden of mine—
I'll have no private signals in my masks,
Nor whispers in my chambers; this poor youth,
This upstart boy——

BIANCA. Nay, mother, do you know
'Twas Signor Marcolini?

LADY CARRARA. I *do* know.
This upstart boy, I say——

LORD CARRARA. Pause thee—the youth
Is of a gentle line.

BIANCA. 'Tis so—methinks
That he seems gentle.

LADY CARRARA. So—'tis well, you had better
Sketch me the outline of his qualifications,
All in your prettiest style. A worthy gentleman,
A very worthy—who can lift a hand—
Or praise a lip—or touch a lute—or wear
A black cloak gracefully. 'Tis marvellous well.
Go to thy chamber. Hearing this, for once,
I will not speak't again; henceforth, this gentleman
Shall keep the outside of my gate—henceforth
See that he keep the outside of thine eye.
Go to thy chamber. Doth the moon rise to-night,
Look not thou on it. Keep thy window close;
Ay—and thine ears. Remember—I am angered:
I will not brook these chance regards of thine.
Go to thy chamber.

BIANCA. Hear me, mother, yet—
Nay, let me speak, I pray you. I have hope
The temper and the spirit of my youth
Hath ever been so guided and imbued
With fair obedience and gentle love,
As that you need not fear me now. Sweet mother,
My will hath ever been upheld by yours,
'Twould fear to walk alone. Be not unkind,
My lips are all unpractised in the words
Of opposition. Yet, beseech you, hear me.
You ever have been watchful of the thoughts

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That breathed on my young spirit; you have taught me
How to revere all nobleness of mind,
To love all gentleness of soul; you filled
My heart with such emotions as, I feel,
Awake like soundings in the hollow shell
In sympathy most sweet with what is pure
Or beautiful in others. And it seemed
As if I had found all which you had taught me
To think was noble, in his thoughts, whom now
You bid me hold no farther commune with.
I may have been mistaken; yet, methinks,
I hardly know how little I should care
To find I had erred. I know, I should not make
The error again. There's something in me—
Not me, which feels as if you were unkind
To Marcolini. Do not suddenly
Forbid him in your hall.

LADY CARRARA. Unkind, indeed!
Maiden, you think too much of your pale face:
A very pretty piece of meek rebellion
As ever I was angered with. No more;
I have heard too much already. You have heard—
See you obey!

BIANCA. You do me wrong in doubting me.

LADY CARRARA. 'Tis well,
I am glad I do thee wrong. Do thyself none,
I shall be gladder. [*Exit* BIANCA.

LORD CARRARA. 'Tis a sweet girl; but if I ever read
The light of a dark eye, your guardianship
Is just too late. I'faith, I do not care,
This Marcolini is a noble youth;
He has had fair fortune with her. You observed
How painfully subdued her words, as if
There had been that deep laid within which feared
Its unfelt shadow should be made and marked
Into existence by her words, while yet
It felt and understood not its own being.
Believe me, all your caution is in vain,
Except to torture.

LADY CARRARA. Tush, my lord, you would yield
To all her childish fancies. Torture, indeed!
You should be ashamed to speak of your fair daughter
As of a country girl. A proper man
To torture a Carrara.

LORD CARRARA. Be it so.

LADY CARRARA. I might have seen to this before, but yet,
It shall not be too late to remedy. [*Exeunt.*

[*Unfinished.*]

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APPENDIX

I. DAME WIGGINS OF LEE
II. RHYMES TO MUSIC
III. NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL MSS. OF THE POEMS
IV. CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF POEMS

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[FRONTISPIECE TO THE ORIGINAL EDITION,
AND TO THAT OF 1885.]

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I

DAME WIGGINS OF LEE

AND HER

SEVEN WONDERFUL CATS

A HUMOROUS TALE

WRITTEN PRINCIPALLY BY A LADY OF NINETY

EDITED, WITH ADDITIONAL VERSES

BY JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH
AND HONORARY FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD

AND WITH NEW ILLUSTRATIONS

BY KATE GREENAWAY

WITH TWENTY-TWO WOODCUTS

[For *Bibliographical Note*, see p. 526.]

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PREFACE

THE woodcuts which illustrate the following nursery rhymes have been facsimiled with exemplary care and admirable skill by Mr. W. H. Hooper,[1] from those which were given coloured by hand in the edition of 1823. But I think that clever children will like having the mere outlines to colour in their own way; and for older students there may be some interest in observing how much life and reality may be obtained by the simplest methods of engraving, when the design is founded on action instead of effect. The vigorous black type of the text has also been closely matched.[1]

I have spoken in *Fors* (vol. v. pp. 37–38)[2] of the meritorious rhythmic cadence of the verses, not, in its way, easily imitable. In the old book, no account is given of what the cats learned when they went to school, and I thought my younger readers might be glad of some notice of such particulars. I have added, therefore, the rhymes on the third, fourth, eighth, and ninth pages—the kindness of Miss Greenaway supplying the needful illustrations.[3] But my rhymes do not ring like the real ones; and I would not allow Miss Greenaway to subdue the grace of her first sketches to the formality of the earlier work: but we alike trust that the interpolation may not be thought to detract from the interest of the little book, which, for the rest, I have the greatest pleasure in commending to the indulgence of the Christmas fireside, because it relates nothing that is sad, and pourtrays nothing that is ugly.

J. RUSKIN.

4th October, 1885.

[1] [In this edition, somewhat reduced.]
[2] [In the first edition; Letter 50.]
[3] [Ruskin's rhymes are those following the third, fourth, eighth, and ninth woodcuts (from Miss Greenaway's drawings). For Ruskin's references to Kate Greenaway, see *Art of England*, Lecture iv., and *Fors Clavigera*, Letter xciv.]

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DAME WIGGINS of Lee
Was a worthy old soul,
As e'er threaded a nee-
dle, or wash'd in a bowl:
She held mice and rats
In such antipa-thy;
That seven fine cats
Kept Dame Wiggins of Lee.

The rats and mice scared
By this fierce whisker'd crew,
The poor seven cats
Soon had nothing to do;
So, as any one idle
She ne'er loved to see,
She sent them to school,
Did Dame Wiggins of Lee.

The Master soon wrote
That they all of them knew
How to read the word "milk"
And to spell the word "mew."
And they all washed their faces
Before they took tea:
"Were there ever such dears!"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.

He had also thought well
To comply with their wish
To spend all their play-time
In learning to fish
For stitlings; they sent her
A present of three,
Which, fried, were a feast
For Dame Wiggins of Lee.

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But soon she grew tired
Of living alone;
So she sent for her cats
From school to come home.
Each rowing a wherry,
Returning you see:
The frolic made merry
Dame Wiggins of Lee.

The Dame was quite pleas'd,
And ran out to market;
When she came back
They were mending the carpet.
The needle each handled
As brisk as a bee;
"Well done, my good cats,"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.

To give them a treat,
She ran out for some rice;
When she came back,
They were skating on ice.
"I shall soon see one down,
Aye, perhaps, two or three,
I'll bet half-a-crown,"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.

When spring-time came back
They had breakfast of curds;
And were greatly afraid
Of disturbing the birds.
"If you sit, like good cats,
All the seven in a tree,
They will teach you to sing!"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.

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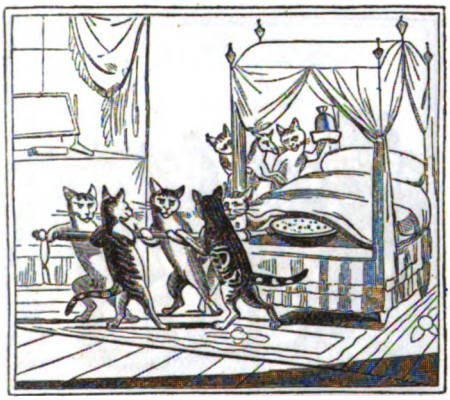
So they sat in a tree,
And said "Beautiful! Hark!"
And they listened and looked
In the clouds for the lark.
Then sang, by the fireside,
Symphonious-ly,
A song without words
To Dame Wiggins of Lee.

They called the next day
On the tomtit and sparrow,
And wheeled a poor sick lamb
Home in a barrow.
"You shall all have some sprats
For your humani-ty,
My seven good cats,"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.



While she ran to the field,
To look for its dam,
They were warming the bed
For the poor sick lamb:
They turn'd up the clothes
All as neat as could be;
"I shall ne'er want a nurse,"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.

She wished them good night,
And went up to bed:
When, lo! in the morning,
The cats were all fled.
But soon—what a fuss!
"Where can they all be?
Here, pussy, puss, puss!"
Cried Dame Wiggins of Lee.

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The Dame's heart was nigh broke,
So she sat down to weep,
When she saw them come back
Each riding a sheep:
She fondled and patted
Each purring Tom-my:
"Ah! welcome, my dears,"
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.

The Dame was unable
Her pleasure to smother;
To see the sick Lamb
Jump up to its mother.
In spite of the gout,
And a pain in her knee,
She went dancing about:
Did Dame Wiggins of Lee.

The Farmer soon heard
Where his sheep went astray,
And arrived at Dame's door
With his faithful dog Tray.
He knocked with his crook,
And the stranger to see,
Out of window did look
Dame Wiggins of Lee.

For their kindness he had them
All drawn by his team;
And gave them some field-mice,
And raspberry-cream.
Said he, "All my stock
You shall presently see;
For I honour the cats
Of Dame Wiggins of Lee."

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He sent his maid out
For some muffins and crumpets;
And when he turn'd round
They were blowing of trumpets.
Said he, "I suppose,
She's as deaf as can be,
Or this ne'er could be borne
By Dame Wiggins of Lee."

To show them his poultry,
He turn'd them all loose,
When each nimbly leap'd
On the back of a Goose,
Which frighten'd them so
That they ran to the sea,
And half-drown'd the poor cats
Of Dame Wiggins of Lee.

For the care of his lamb,
And their comical pranks,
He gave them a ham
And abundance of thanks.
"I wish you good-day,
My fine fellows," said he;
"My compliments, pray,
To Dame Wiggins of Lee."

You see them arrived
At their Dame's welcome door;
They show her their presents,
And all their good store.
"Now come in to supper,
And sit down with me;
All welcome once more,"
Cried Dame Wiggins of Lee.

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[*Bibliographical Note.*—Ruskin's "calf milk of books was, on the lighter side, composed of 'Dame Wiggins of Lee,' 'The Peacock at Home,' and the like nursery rhymes" (*Præterita*, i. ch. iii. § 61). One of the characters in Ruskin's "Puppet Show" of 1829 (see above, p. xxxii.) was Dame Wiggins. He made two illustrations—one of the Dame and the other of the cat, and wrote the following rhymes:—

"My name is Dame Wiggins; I'm called of Lee,
And seven good cats take care of me,
Which keep my little house from mice,
Catch and devour them in a trice.
My chin doth almost touch my nose,
And touch it will if on it grows."

In *Fors Clavigera* (Letter l. 1875), Ruskin discoursed of a certain children's book of that date (*The Children's Prize*, Dec. 1873), and compared it very unfavourably with the nursery fare provided in his childhood. He commended both the rhythm of "Dame Wiggins" and its matter. In 1885 he republished the book, with additional stanzas of his own, and drawings to illustrate them, by Kate Greenaway. The title-page was as shown in the half-title, above, p. 519, except for the illustration of the cat at an easel. This comes from the title-page of the original issue, which was also reprinted in the 1885 edition. The frontispiece to the original issue was also given; here given slightly reduced (p. 518). Ruskin's edition of 1885 was post octavo, pp. vi. + 20. Published at 1s. 6d. Large paper copies (foolscap quarto), 2s. 6d. The small paper issue reached a third edition in 1902. The original issue was published in 1823. A reprint of it, with the illustrations printed in colours, was issued by Messrs. Field & Tuer in 1887 (being No. I. of their series of "Forgotten Picture Books for Children"). From the introduction by Mr. Andrew W. Tuer, it appears that the authors were Richard Scrafton Sharpe and Mrs. Pearson (then at the age of ninety), and that the illustrations were by R. Stennet. It was "a very popular book indeed, four differently illustrated editions rapidly following each other; but in the later ones the humour of the first was entirely absent, and they met the usual fate of mediocrity."]

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II

RHYMES TO MUSIC[1]

"JOANNA'S CARE"

What shall we say to her,
Now she is here?—
Don't go away again,
Joanie, my dear!

[1880.]

THE SONG IN THE QUEEN'S PARLOUR

[A RHYME FOR "ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOLS"]

Ounce of comb in Saxon hive,
Count it ten times forty-five:
Pound of grain in Saxon store,
Count it hundreds fifty-four.
Count ye true in Saxon tower
Pound by ounce, and day by hour.

[1880.]

THE SONG OF THE QUEEN'S GARDEN: NAUSICAA

The King was in his counting-house
Counting out his money:
The Queen was in the—garden
Giving bread and honey.

The maid along the beach to bleach
Was laying out the linen;
At home, her handmaids, each to each,
Had a dainty room to spin in.

[1881.]

[NURSERY DRILL]

Let the little ones run,
But let the wise ones walk,—
Steady as steps the sun,
Straight as a barley-stalk.
And when all is nicely done,
We shall have time to talk.

[1886.]

[TENNIS INTERRUPTED]

In the Isle of Skye
The girls are shy;
And out of tune
By the Crook of Lune.
And they can't tell why,
But the balls go awry;
And they can't play tennis—
Neither Aggies nor Clennies—
With "the Stones of Venice"
A-standin' by!

[1886.]

[RED-RIDING-HOOD]

Far through all the pathless wild-wood
Wintry shades of evening close;
But, as still that mountain-child could,
Libby led the way for Rose.

[1] [The following rhymes were printed in the *Poems*, 1891, ii. pp. 330–331, 335–337, and must therefore here be given.]

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Running, leaping, skipping, sliding—
  Only no one understood
What she had to do with riding,
  Or why called Red-Riding-Hood!

[1886.]

[TEA IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM]

Draw the curtains tight, Babette;
Stir the embers bright, Babette:
Poor Fifine is cold and wet,
  And sadly wants her tea:
—Poor Fifine, the sweet, the sweet!—
What have we got that's nice to eat?
—Warm her hands, and toast her feet,
  And then, and then,—we'll see!

[1886.]

ST. PETER

["The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light."]

St. Peter went to fish,
When sprats were twopence a dish:
But St. Peter went to preach,
When sprats were twopence each.

[1887.]

[THE ANSWER, TO BABY]

Fishes in the sea,—
Apples on the tree,—
What is it to me,
Baby, whose they be?

[*April* 21, 1887.]

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III

NOTES ON THE ORIGINAL MSS. OF THE POEMS

[REVISED AND COMPLETED FROM THE EDITION OF 1891][1]

The early writings of Mr. Ruskin were carefully preserved by his parents, who encouraged, though they do not seem to have supervised, the production of his juvenile attempts. In only two or three instances a word has been crossed out, and an emendation substituted by his father; but in several places his father and mother have inserted dates into the note-books, or endorsed a loose sheet "John's Poetry (*Date*)." There is no trace of subsequent revision on the author's part of any poems, except those which actually appeared in print during his youth.[2]

Some of the MSS. are very beautifully written in "copperplate" or "print" hand: indeed, the fair-copying seems to have been quite as important a business as the invention and versification, which were apparently spontaneous, and—to judge from the comparatively small amount of interlineation—almost improvisational. But in the rough original drafts the writing is difficult to read; and, as a single poem was often composed in fragments, at different times, interspersed between all sorts of other writings, the MSS. present a very chaotic appearance.

After some study of these ancient Codices, and of their Palæography—for they present a complete sequence of the phases of Mr. Ruskin's handwriting from the earliest period—the editor has been able to disentangle their contents and to arrange them in chronological order; which it may be worth while to note here, both for the assistance of future students, and in justification of the hypothetical dates assigned to some of the poems.

No. I. Ruled note-book, bound in red leather; 6 by nearly 4 inches; pp. 88, of which 77 (numbered wrongly up to 96) contain "Harry and Lucy" (see *Præterita*, i. ch. iii. § 61), and the rest, the six poems mentioned [above, see p. 254]. The book was begun in September or October 1826, and finished in January 1827. One at least of the poems had been written before the book was begun.

[The six poems are that on the steam-engine beginning, "When furious up from mines the water pours," and those entitled "On Scotland"—"The Defiance of War"—"The Needless Alarm"—"On papa's leaving home"—On the Rainbow." All these were no doubt fair-copied into the book from rough, if contemporary, drafts.]

[1] Vol. i. pp. 261–267. By the editor of that edition, Mr. W. G. Collingwood.

[2] This is not quite accurate. There is a good deal of revision between draft and fair copy, and in one or two cases Ruskin altered a word, when reading over the poems, perhaps for *Præterita*, in later years; see, *e.g.*, note 2 on p. 433.

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[No. Ia. Thin folio, bound in red cloth,[1] containing the following MSS. (1827–42):—
1827. *The Monastery* versified, 80 ll.
,, The Constellations.
,, "Papa, what's Time?"
1829. Bosworth Field—Vesuvius—Trafalgar—The Yew (Eudosia).
1830. Death.
1831. "Twelve months all rolling round have past:"—Athens (seven stanzas).
1833. "The month of May"—Tour on the Continent (portions only).
1834. Birthday Ode, with The Crystal Hunter.
1836. Birthday Ode—Mont Blanc (47 ll., his mother's copy)—Visit to the Hospice (down to Sc. v.).
1838. A Scythian Banquet Song.
1842. The Broken Chain, Part v. st. 17 to end (his father's copy).
,, Prose translation of Homer's Iliad, i. ii. 1–127.]

[No. Ib. A thin (8vo) MS. Book,[2] bound in half leather, green, with marbled sides and edges, containing "The Puppet Show," 30 leaves with 57 drawings. See above, Introduction to this volume, p. xxxii.]

No. II. Home-made book of plain paper, no cover; nearly 6½ by 4 inches; pp. 32; consisting of rough drafts of poems, "Harry and Lucy,"[3] and fragments of a letter to his father and another to Mrs. Monro, also brief notes of two sermons. This belongs to the first half of 1828.

[The poems are: "Look at that Ship"—Description of an Afternoon—("Far to the west hath set the sun")—"Shall the dust praise thee?" (Ps. xxx.)—O blessed is the man who walks (Ps. i.)—Eudosia (three fragments)—Victory or Song of Waterloo—On the Rainbow—Joyous, Joyous, Joyous May—On Skiddaw and Derwent Water—"These worldly things are fair"—"We say that this world is unhappy"—"If such the beauties of an earthly shore."]

No. III. Red book, uniform with No. I., but containing only 84 pp. This is confusedly put together at different periods. (*a*) The title-page bears "Harry and Lucy (etc.) vol. ii.," begun in 1827 as sequel to No. I. (*b*) Simultaneously with the prose story, on p. 62 begins a collection of previously written verses under the heading "poetry discriptive" (*sic*), lasting to p. 70. (*c*) Then the author turned back, and, about New Year 1828, to judge from the writing as well as from the entries, continued the same collection from p. 21 to p. 33. (*d*) Then he filled the end of the volume with two "Books" of "The Monastery" (Scott's novel versified). (*e*) Having reached the last page, he turned back to p. 52 for "Book 3," and "Book 4" ends incomplete on p. 58. This poem was written during the first half of 1828. (*f*) Finally, in March 1829 this volume was taken up again, and pp. 36–50 were filled with miscellaneous verses. No. III., therefore, dates from 1827 to 1829.

[The poems in this book are:—
Poetry Discriptive:—Ragland Castle—Loch Leven—Nature—Spring—Wales—The Hill of Kinnoul—Glen of Glenfarg.

[1] This volume has been bound up since Ruskin's death, and is thus an addition to the list in the *Poems*, 1891.

[2] This book, the existence of which was not known at Brantwood till after Ruskin's death, was thus also omitted from the list in the *Poems*, 1891.

[3] Another similar red book contains the remainder of "Harry and Lucy," and some more notes of sermons.

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The Constellations—"Papa, what's Time?"—The Sun—Glenfarg—("Papa, how pretty those icicles are")—"Look at that Ship" (first draft)—The British Battles—"Of rocks and caverns now I sing"—"Look at that Ship" (enlarged version)—Sonnet to the Sun—The Yellow Fog—"The summit of Skiddaw was gilt by the sun" (fragment of "A Battle," 1828, see *s.* No. XI.)—A Shipwreck—"The world that in its orbit flies"—"Far towards Chelsea"—"Ben Lomond"—"Thy winding rivers, Scotland"—"I will extol thee" (Ps. xxx.)—Scott's *Monastery* (Books iii. and iv.).

The Sea—The Storm—Scott's *Monastery* (Books i., ii.)—and a fragment of prose, entitled "The Adventures of an Ant; A Tale."]

No. IV. Red book, similar to Nos. I. and III., containing title and pp. 17 of "Eudosia" (*Præterita*, i. ch. iii. pp. 89–91); followed by Mr. J. J. Ruskin's catalogue, compiled in after years, of his son's published poems; beginning with the entry, "On Skiddaw and Derwent Water; page 72, *Spiritual Times*, February 1831, age 11 years;" and ending in the year 1846 with the note that he had been "compared with Goethe, Coleridge, J. Taylor Burke, Juvenal." The end of the book contains mineralogy notes, as mentioned in *Præterita* (*loc. cit.*).

[The only poetical matter is "Eudosia," Book i. ll. 1–220, and Book ii.]

No. V. Ruled note-book; greenish marbled boards, half-bound in chocolate calf, gilt; 7¼ by 4¾ inches; pp. 167 numbered, of which 138 are filled in a very neat "print" hand: no title; p. 1 headed "MISCELLANEOUS POETRY," to which his father has subjoined "*By J. Ruskin from* 10 *years to* 11 *to* 12 *to* *of age.*" The poems are nearly all dated, and range from June 28, 1829, to February 1832. The dates are probably those of production, for they are slightly inconsecutive, which would not be the case if they were dates of entry; and, when chronologically arranged, they tally with the order of the first drafts in No. VI.

[This contains "Helvellyn, Helvellyn, thou mountainous king"—The Moon—The wood of beeches near Tunbridge—On Happiness—Psalm ix.—Sabbath Morning—Shagram's Farewell—Etna—Bosworth Field—Vesuvius—Trafalgar—Death—The Day of Judgment—Battle of Preston Pans (vide *Waverley*)—Revenge—Despair—Love—Haddon Hall—My Dog Dash ("I have a dog")—On the Death of my Cousin Jessie—My Fishing Rod—The Ascent of Skiddaw—Going to Covent Garden Theatre—The Fairies—To my Heart—To Poesie—A Dirge for Nelson—To the Ocean-Spirits—To the Fairies—To the Spirits of the Earth—To the Spirits of the Fire—To the Wind—Weep for the Dead—The Mariner's Song—Want of a Subject—To the Spirit of Mount Pilate (on reading *Anne of Geierstein*)—The Site of Babylon—Repentance of Nineveh—Dash ("Was there ever like Dashy?")—Moonlight on the Mountains—Sonnet to a Cloud—Creation—Iteriad (i. 401–428)—Athens (fair copy of 17 stanzas)—Sonnet to the Morning—The Song of the Southern Breeze.

In this book, too, are now inserted the leaves of a thin paper book containing, fair copied (1829), the following:—The Battle of Waterloo: a play—and fair copies of the following (from No. II.)—Ballad on (Victory or Song of) Waterloo, Description of an Afternoon—May ("Joyous, joyous, joyous May")—On Skiddaw and Derwent Water.]

No. VI. Tall ruled note-book; 12½ by 4½ inches; reddish marbled paper covers, of which one and 57 pp. have been torn away, leaving pp. 80. This was a rough-copy book, begun at the commencement of 1830. It contains first drafts of poems copied into No. V., and of the "Iteriad," and others; and serves until September or October

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1831. Later on, in 1838, it was taken up and used for a rough copy of the "Essay on the Comparative Advantages of Music and Painting" (on which see *Præterita*, i. ch. xii. p. 409). And at the end, the book being turned round, begins anew with [the beginning of] a prose story, "Macbeth" [dated Sept. 10, 1830]. It has an incomplete Index, showing that pp. 1–57 contained poems, now lost, on "Bonaparte" [Dash, Fun], "Greek," "Ghost of old English Roast-beef" [Heat], "Ivanhoe," "London Streets," "Lion," "To Myself," "Revolution" [Rustic in London, Salamis], "Senna Tea" [Tempest], as well as a number of poems preserved in No. V., dating from February 1, 1830, to January 5, 1831.

[This contains these poems:—The Iteriad (i. 176–518; ii. 1–426, 437–538, 605–682, 689–693; iv. 27–84, 101–261)—Poesie—To the Wind—On the Want of a Subject—To Dash Howling—"Oh dear, the feminine gender"—The Doctors—Shakspeare's Grave—Life ("There is a time")—Day of Joy—"Oh, bravely are breaking the billows"—Creation ("The second day past by," three stanzas)—Death—"Canst tell me where is joy?"—Bed-time—"I love ye, ye eternal hills"—With the Want of a Hero, and a few fragments ("Oh might not she have found a place," "Oh how I loves (*sic*) to sweep along," "Melancholy won't away," "With those it does not signify"). With, corrected by his father, prose translations of Horace, Odes I. 24, and part of 25.]

No. VII.[1] Ruled note-book, greenish marbled paper boards, half-bound in dark blue leather; 10 by 8½ inches: pp. 1–115 occupied by the "Iteriad," and six more by [a fair copy of stanzas 1–6 of the] unfinished poem on "Athens." The whole is written in a fair "copperplate" hand, with flourished Gothic titles. The book, being reversed, contains pp. 23 of Mr. Ruskin's writings copied in a female hand, perhaps Mary Richardson's, beginning with "The Rhine" and "Chamouni" from the tour of 1833; also part of "Mont Blanc" and the "Rhyming Letter to Richard Fall" (end of Oct. 1836). I. contains also an essay which I make no doubt is the long-lost *Reply to the Criticism on Turner in Blackwood's Magazine*, "of which," its author said in 1886, "I wish I could now find any fragment" (*Præterita*, i. ch. xii. § 243). It bears date Oct. 1, 1836, and is highly interesting as the germ, both in subject and style, of *Modern Painters*. I am happy in the permission to print this and other early unpublished prose writings in a companion volume to these Poems.[2]

No. VIII. Ruled note-book; reddish paper boards, half-bound in black leather; 9½ by 5¾ inches; pp. 272 and fly-leaves. This contains rough copies of poems, beginning at the end of September or early in October 1831, and ending in 1838, including the prose story of *Leoni* in first draft. The volume is very confused in its stratification; but I believe the following to be the true sequence of the formations unconformably exposed in it:—(*a*) Pp. 1–53 contain verses ranging from the later part of "Iteriad, Book 4," up to "The Month of May" (May 10, 1833). (*b*) After the summer tour to Switzerland and Italy it was taken up again, and the prose and verse description of that tour was begun on p. 54. (*c*) But before half the projected quantity had been composed, the author had occasion to write the New Year's address to his father for 1835; and so, leaving as many pages as he calculated would be full

[1] This and some other of the MSS. were in the edition of 1891 named as "in the possession of Mrs. Arthur Severn," but since Ruskin's death this is so of them all.

[2] The Reply to *Blackwood* will now be found in the third volume of this edition, and the other early unpublished prose writings in the Appendix to Vol. I.

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space for the remainder of the "Tour," he began afresh on p. 168 with the poem from which "The Months" is extracted; following with other occasional verse, including "The Avalanche" and "The Emigration of the Sprites," and ending with the Birthday Address to his Father, May 10, 1836. (*d*) Meanwhile, the 1833 "Tour" was abandoned, and was followed on p. 106 by some poems descriptive of a new Tour—that of 1835; and, on entering 1836, by the poems to "Adèle" and *Leoni*. This section ends, on p. 167, with "Memory;—The Summer Wind is soft and kind," dated in "Poems. J. R." *Ætat.* 19 (*i.e.* 1838). It is a surprise to go on from that, on the next page, to section (*c*) in earlier handwriting, and a poem indubitably written in 1834! (*e*) Farther, on p. 194, the unfinished play of *Marcolini* was begun, in the summer of 1836, and occupies the next section of the volume. (*f*) Lastly, the book, being reversed, contains occasional poems which I attribute to May–December, 1834; *i.e.* written *after* the Birthday-poem of 1834, which occurs in the middle of 1833 "Tour," and *before* he began his plan of the fresh section (*c*). This section (*f*) includes "The Invention of Quadrilles."

[This is the most important of the poetical MSS. It contains:—

Athens (22 stanzas)—Iteriad—A poet is a very foolish stay—'Twas night, I stood by Tweed's fair stream—To the Spirit of Mount Pilate—The Site of Babylon—The Repentance of Nineveh—Whither, whither, dost thou fly? (from Anacreon)—Was there ever like Dashy?—I enter on a very mighty nought—Curtained in cloudy drapery—I here begin an invocation—Assist me, oh, thou muse divine—There is a solemn silence on the scene—Sonnet to a Cloud—O mighty monarch—Harlech Castle—I heard the waters (Water Spirit)—For the sound of death is in the breeze (Tempest Spirit)—The grave of the dead is the voice of our glory—To the morning—Song of the Southern Breeze—The Destruction of Pharaoh—The mountain breeze, it is sunk to sleep—The Isle of the (Ocean), "Sadness with me is quite a *rara avis*" (Birthday Address, 1831, with the poem, "Twelve months all rolling round have past")—"Aspice pater invocationem"—Llyn Idwal—The Grave of the Poet—"Through the stone and ancient gate"—"I weary for the torrent leaping"—"Have ye never heard of the Brownie wight"—"The eve was darkening on the deep"—"The month of May, the month of May"—"Oh, are there spirits"—The Tour on the Continent, 1833[1]—"The lake smiled sweetly."

The Vintage—The Crystal Hunter—Birthday Ode, 1834—Salzburg—St. Bernard (prose)—Ascent of the St. Bernard (dramatic sketch)—Venice—Leoni—A dream of her came in my sleep—Jacqueline—Come, water the flowers—Chamois Hunter's Song—"She lays her down"—"She sat beside me"—Swiss Maiden's Song—Alpine Glow—Swiss Peasant's Song—The Iris—The Alpine Lake—Evening in Company—On Adèle—Oh, she is gone—Nature Untenanted—It was upon the breeze of home—'Twas but a moment's falter—In winter thou camest—The summer wind is soft and kind—New

[1] "Oh, are there spirits," The Source of the Arveron (prose), The Arve at Chamouni, Andernacht (prose), St. Goar (prose), Sabbath Eve, Via Mala, Splügen, The Summit, The Descent, The Meuse (prose), Cologne (prose), The Black Forest, "It was a wide . . . whole day" (prose), Brussels (prose), Chiavenna, Como, Genoa, Lago Maggiore, Aix la Chapelle (prose), Heidelberg, The Traditions of the Rhine (prose), Ehrenbreitstein, Schaffhausen, Chamouni, Ehrenbreitstein (prose), and Heidelberg (prose), Source of the Arveron, Cadenabbia, Villa Pliniana. Thus MS. viii. with the above passages, and MS. ix. with a fair copy up to the beginning of the prose on Heidelberg, contain the whole of the Tour of 1833 except the verses on the Rhine and Chamouni (only in vii.), the prose on Chamouni (only in xi.), and the verses on Milan and Passing the Alps (only in ix).

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Year's Address, with "The Months" (1835)—"The fire is bright"—Birthday Ode, 1835, with "Domecq's Vineyard"—The Avalanche—The Emigration of the Sprites—The Invasion of the Alps—Birthday Ode, 1836—Marcolini—The Invention of Quadrilles—It was as if awaking from a dream—The dawn is breaking—and a few fragments.]

No. IX. Thick, ruled note-book; brown marbled boards, half-bound in bluish-green leather; 8 by 6½ inches. Pp. 1–21 are prepared for alphabetical index; pp. 22–23 contain quotations in Mrs. J. J. Ruskin's handwriting,—"Advice of his mother to the Chevalier Bayard," and 1 Chronicles, xxviii. 9. Pp. 25–111, about a third of the book, were filled with prose and verse in a good "copperplate" hand, and with inserted drawings illustrating his tour of the year before. It is about this book that he says, etc.[1]

No. X. A cover containing:—

(*a*) "Journal [by John Ruskin and Mary Richardson] of a Tour to the Lakes in 1830;" in two paper books = 44 + 20 pages.

(*b*) The Poetical Tour of 1835, in two paper books; Canto I. = pp. 26; Canto II. as far as carried = pp. 10.

(*c*) Letter from Abroad to Richard Fall (1835); 5 large pages, double columns.

(*d*) "Conversation supposed to be held on New Year's Day, 1836;" pp. 6.

(*e*) Letter to his Father in verse; the original, with postmark—(MR. 31, 1836).

(*f*) Part of "The Exile of St. Helena"—a poem sent in for the Newdigate Prize, 1838; lines 1–185 = pp. 7.

And other papers, not in verse.

[Of the above, (*a*) is now separately bound, two leaves of the original, presented to the Ruskin Museum at Coniston by Mrs. Severn, being replaced by a copy of them. The other items are also now bound up in a volume (No. X.), which contains in addition a copy of "Poesie" (in his mother's hand?), and the later Peace and Zodiac Songs (see pp. 245–247 of this volume). The "other papers" were the MS. of the *Essay on Music* and the *Chronicles of the St. Bernard*, for which see *ante*, Vol. I. pp. 522–551.]

No. XI. An envelope containing collected loose papers, including poems; fair-copied by the author as presents, chiefly to his father; or copied by others. These are useful as fixing dates in some cases—*e.g.* the New Year's Address, 1827—and as supplying corrections or additions in other instances.

[The above, together with some others, are now bound up in a volume of letters and poems, 1827–44, containing: "Look at that Ship"—The Sun—Glenfarg—A Battle—I will extol thee (Ps. xxx.)—Shipwreck (two stanzas)—Poetical letters to his father, March 6, 1830—Sadness with me is quite a *rara avis*, 1831 (without the poem, "Twelve months," see above, *s.* No. viii.)—Poetical letters to his father, March 10 ("But this day week") 1834, Jan. 1, Feb. 18, March 11, May 10, 1835; to his friend Willoughby, July 15, 1835; Birthday Ode, 1835, and Domecq's Vineyard—Poetical letters to his father, Feb. 27, Dec. 1836, May 10, 1837.]

[1] The rest of the passage is cited above, in the note on p. 340.

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IV

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF POEMS

In the following list both published and unpublished poems are again given, in order that the topics which were occupying Ruskin's mind during his early years may be seen. The figures in brackets immediately after each poem refer to the MSS. (see above, p. 529), and where the poem is printed in this volume, the page is then given.

1826–27.

Poetry discriptive (*sic*):—
- Ragland Castle, 10 ll. (iii.). 255–256 *n.*
- Lochleven, 13 ll. (iii.).
- Nature, 4 ll. (iii.).
- Spring; blank verse, 20 ll. (iii.).
- Wales, 9 ll. (iii.).
- The Hill of Kinnoul, 13 ll. (iii.).

} These are marked by his father below the last of them, "Sept. 1826"; and the first of them may thus be as early as those in MS. Book I., marked by his mother, "Sept. 1826–Jan. 1827."

Glen of Glenfarg (iii.). 257.

The Sea, 8 ll. (iii.).

The Storm (iii.). There are two versions of this, the first (10 ll.) being marked "Bad" by its author, and then attempted again in 14 ll.

- [On the Steam-Engine] 34 ll. (i.). 254 *n.*
- On Scotland (i.). 255.
- The Defiance of War, 16 ll. (i.).
- The Needless Alarm (i.). 255.
- On Papa's leaving home, 10 ll. (i.).
- On the Rainbow: in blank verse, 23 ll. (i.). Quoted, 254.

} These are marked by his mother at the end of the last of them, "Jan. 1826. This book was begun about Sept.–Oct. 1826, and finished about January, 1827." See above, p. 529.

Papa, what's Time? (iA, iii.). 258–259. Dated 1 Jan. 1827 in iA.

1827.

The Constellations (iA, iii.).

"*The Monastery* versified" (iA, iii.). 260 *n*, 276 *n*.

- The Sun (iii. xi.). 260.
- Glenfarg (iii. xi.). 262.

} Fair copy in xi. Dated 1 Jan. 1828.

Look at that Ship (ii. iii. xi.). 264 *n*. There are two versions of this poem, one of 25 ll., the other of 44 ll. Both begin in the same way, but end differently. Of the former there are two MSS., one in MS. Book iii. (undated), the other dated Feb. or March 1827 in MS. Book xi. Of the latter there are also two MSS., one undated in No. ii., the other dated March 1829 in No. iii. See below, *s.* 1829. The longer version is quoted at pp. 263–264 *n*.

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1828.

Eudosia (iA, ii. iv.). 269.
May (ii. v.). 263.
Battle of Waterloo, a play (v.).
Ballad on (Victory or Song of) Waterloo (ii. v.).
Description of an Afternoon—"Far to the West" (ii. v.).
Skiddaw and Derwent Water (ii. v.). 265.
Shall the dust praise thee? Ps. xxx. (ii.). See also *s.* 1829.
O blessed is the man, Ps. i. (ii.).
On the Rainbow (ii.).
These worldly things are fair (ii.).
We say that this world is unhappy (ii.).
If such the beauties of an earthly shore (ii.).
The British Battles (iii.).
Of rocks and caverns now I sing (iii.). This refers to Matlock.
A Battle (iii. xi.). "The summit of Skiddaw." Dated Dec. 31, 1828.
Highland Music. Facsimile, preceding p. 265.

1829.

The Puppet Show (iB). xxxii.–xxxiii.
Look at that Ship. Revision 44 ll. 263–264 n. March 1829 (ii. iii. xi.). See above, *s.* 1827.
I will extol thee, Ps. xxx. (iii.).
Sonnet to the Sun (iii.).
A Shipwreck (iii. xi.). Feb. 21–March 9.
The Yellow Fog (iii.). 272. March.
The Moon (v.). 273. June 28.
Helvellyn, Helvellyn (v.). July 5.
The wood of beeches near Tunbridge (v.). July 12.
Yes, I will praise thee, Ps. ix. (v.). July 19.
On Happiness (v.). 274. July 19.
Sabbath Morning (v.). 275. Aug. 2–16.
Shagram's Farewell (v.). 276. Oct. 18.
Etna (v.). 278. Oct. 25.
Bosworth Field (iA, v.). Draft dated Dec. 30, 1829. Fair-copied for Jan. 1, 1830.
Fragments (iii.):—
The world that in its orbit flies.
Far towards Chelsea.
On the noble Ben Lomond.
Thy winding rivers, Scotland.

1830.

Vesuvius (iA, v.). Fair-copied for Feb. 8, 1830. Feb. 1.
Trafalgar (iA, v.). 279. Fair-copied for Feb. 8, 1830. Feb. 12.
Letter to his father, part in rhyme (xi.). March 6.
Death (iA, v. vi.). March.
The Battle of Preston Pans (vide *Waverley*) (v.). April 19.
My Dog Dash (v.). 281. April 30.
The Day of Judgment (v.). May 22–June 13.
Revenge (v.).
Despair (v.). July 11.
Love (v.).
Haddon Hall (v.). 284. June–July.
Creation—"Day had not dawned" (v.). Aug. 2.
On the Death of my Cousin Jessie (v.). 285. [Sept. 9.]
My Fishing Rod (v.). Dec. 20.
The Ascent of Skiddaw (Iteriad) (v.). 302. Dec. 26.

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1831.

The Fairies (v.). Jan. 5. Facsimile, between pp. 316 and 317.
The Iteriad (v. vi. vii. viii.). 286, 287, 293, 302, 308. Dec. 1830–Sept. 1831.
A Dirge for Nelson (v.). Jan. 25, 1831.
To my Heart (v.). 316. Jan. 26.
Weep for the Dead (v.). Jan. 28, 1831.
The Mariner's Song (v.).
Going to Covent Garden Theatre (v.). Jan. 28, 1831.
To Poesie (v. vi.). 318. March 11.
Want of a Subject (v. vi.). 320. March.
To the Wind (v. vi.). March 12, 1831.
Oh dear, the feminine gender (vi.). March 21, 1831 (? 1830).
The Doctors (vi.). About March 1830–31.
Sadness with me is quite a *rara avis* (viii. xi.). Birthday Address, with
Twelve months all rolling round have past (viii.).
To the Ocean Spirits (v.). 322. June 20.
To the Fairies (v.). 324. June 20.
To the Spirits of the Earth (v.). June 22, 1831.
To the Spirits of the Fire (v.). June 22, 1831.
Bed-time (vi.). 326. Sept.
To the Memory of Sir Walter Scott (viii.). 327. Oct.
The Eternal Hills (vi.). 328. Oct.
To the Spirit of Mount Pilate (v. viii.).
The Site of Babylon (v. viii.). 329. Nov. 6–10.
Was there ever like Dashy (v. viii.). 282 *n.* Nov. 16, 1831.
Moonlight on the Mountains (v. viii.). 330. Nov. 30.
Sonnet, Harlech Castle (viii.). 331. 1831, end.
Sonnet to a Cloud (v. viii.). 332. 1831, end.
A poet is a very foolish stay (viii.).
Repentance of Nineveh (v. viii.).
Whither, whither, dost thou fly? Translation from Anacreon (viii.).
Poem on Mr. Rowbotham; erased (viii.).
Athens, 1831–32 (1A, v. vii. viii.).
For the sound of death is in the breeze (viii.).
To Dash Howling (vi.).
Shakespeare's Grave (vi.).
Life—"There is a time" (vi.).
Day of Joy—"One evolution of the earth" (vi.).
Oh! bravely are breaking the billows (vi.).
With those it does not signify, 10 ll. (vi.).
Canst tell me where is joy? (vi.).
With the want of a hero (vi.).
Creation—"The second day" (vi.).
I enter on a very mighty nought (viii.).
I here begin an invocation (viii.).
Assist me, oh, thou muse divine (viii.).
There is a solemn silence on the scene (viii.).
I heard the waters pouring (viii.).
Fragments:—
Oh mighty monarch (viii.).
Methought I stood by ancient Rome, 4 ll. (viii.).
I saw ye sweep athwart the deep, 4 ll. (viii.).
O might she not have found a place (vi.).
Oh how I loves to sweep along (vi.).
Melancholy won't away, 4 ll. (vi.).

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Song—"Though thou hast not a feeling for me." 78.
Horace—"Iter ad Brundusium." 79.
Memory (viii.). 80.
The Name. 81.
Canzonet—"The winter's chill hath charmed the wave." 83.
Fragment from a Meteorological Journal. 85.
Canzonet—"There's a change in the green of the leaf." 87.
Song of the Tyrolese after the Battle of Brixen. 88.

1839.

Salsette and Elephanta. XXV., 90.
The Scythian Guest. 101.
To Adèle. 110.
The Last Song of Arion. 114.
The Tears of Psammenitus. 124.
The Broken Chain, 5 Parts, 1839–42. (Pt. v. 17–end, J. J. R., in.) 132.

1840.

The Two Paths. 189.
The Old Water-Wheel (W. H. Harrison's papers). 191.
Farewell. 193.
The Departed Light. 205.
Agonia. 207.

1841.

The Hills of Carrara. 208.

1842.

Charitie. 211. (For note on MS. see p. 211, note 2.)
The Battle of Montenotte. 214.

1843.

A Walk in Chamouni. 222.

1844.

La Madonna dell' Acqua. 227.
The Old Seaman. 229.
The Alps seen from Marengo. 232.

1845.

Mont Blanc revisited. 233.
The Arve at Cluse. 236.
Mont Blanc. 237.
Written among the Basses Alpes (MS. in a letter to his father.) 238.
The Glacier. 240.

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1847.

For a Birthday in May. 243.

1865 (?)

Awake, Awake (The Peace Song) (x.). 245.
The Zodiac Song (x.). 247.
Twist ye, Twine ye. 248.

1881.

Trust thou thy Love. 250.

(For Rhymes to Music, 1880–87, see pp. 527–528.)

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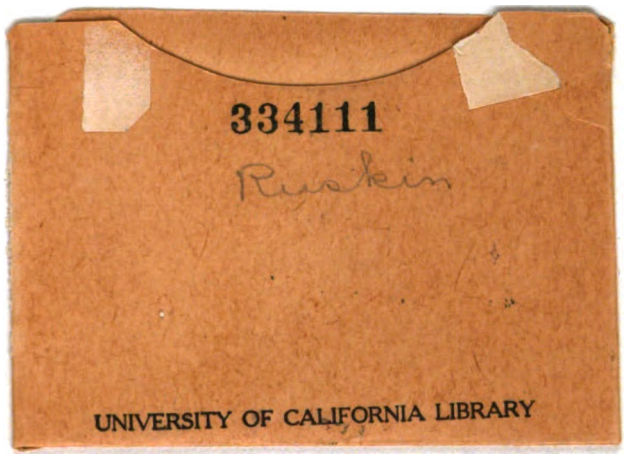

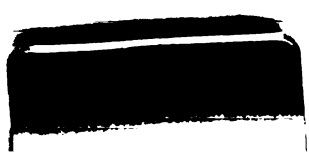

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